

SERIAL REPORT

Chapter 46 July-Sept. 2003

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GOLDEN BOOT AWARDS

Serial favorite Tommy Farrell is set to receive a Golden Boot Award August 9 at Merv Griffin's Beverly Hills Hilton Hotel in

Beverly Hills, CA. Tommy Farrell co-starred in four for Sam Katzman: "Pirates of the High Seas" ('50), "Roar of the Iron Horse" ('51), "Son of Geronimo" ('52), "Gunfighters of the Northwest" ('53). Ben Cooper MC's the evening. Proceeds benefit the Motion Picture Fund. Tickets are \$200 up. (818) 876-1900.



ASK THE SERIAL CELEBS

Q: Tommy Farrell, what are your memories of making "Roar of the Iron Horse" (Columbia '51)?

Tommy Farrell: *It starred Jocko Mahoney who was the best horseman ever to ride in any western. He was an absolute beautiful thing to watch! The most graceful. Bert Leonard was the production assistant. We filmed up in Carson City, NV, and he contracted for local horses. He was assured by the fellow who rented the horses, 'These horses have been in*



lots of films. They're all trained, beautifully.' Wrong! We had a wrangler on the serial who was about 6' 4", built like a Ticonderoga pencil—a redhead from West Texas called Rusty. First morning of the serial I went out and saw all the horses tied up to the trucks. Said, 'Rusty...any of those horses any good?' He says, 'Not a damn one of 'em!' I said, 'Well gee, Rusty, would you pick one for me?' He says, 'If I's you, I'd pick the little bay mare down on the end. You won't have as far to fall.' (Laughs) And Rusty was right. When the other actors showed up—Pierce Lyden, Terry Frost...the whole Katzman gang...everybody got mounted—for a little while. (Laughs) The first ten people that got on horses, within four minutes, there were about three of 'em left riding. (Laughs) Every morning we had a rodeo! (Laughs) The very first shot on the picture was at a little hill. There were about six bad guys up there and four good guys down here. The heavies arrive at the top of the hill and shoot down at us.

First gun that went off, of the guys up there and the guys down here, about four of us were still horsebackin'! (Laughs) The horses were gone! It took about three hours to round up the horses. Then everybody mounted again. The director says, 'Change to quarter loads in the guns.' We'd started out with full loads—but so had the horses!

(Laughs) We had a wonderful stuntman/actor, Frank Matts. He was driving a team and a buckboard. He showed up with the team. They were standing there with their legs wide apart and their backs hunched. Matts says, 'If this is a team, I'm vice president of the United States.' Pierce Lyden, myself and Rusty Wescoat, I think, are in the back of the buckboard. We're shooting back at the guys chasing us. We're going along this little road by the Truckee River. Little winding road. And this team is flying down the road with Frank driving and us shooting. Frank turned around and said, 'Fellas, this team's running away!' (Laughs) I don't know about the rest of you guys but I'm leavin'! Now—without a driver, sittin' in the back of a buckboard just ain't the best place to be! So when Frank jumped, so did we, right out the back and rolled to the side of the road, out of the way of the camera car which was behind us. Next turn, the horses went right in the middle of the river. That was only half the fun! Katzman hired the Ute Indian tribe to play the Indians. Now, the director wants Jocko tied to the stake. They're gonna set him on fire with Indians dancin' around. Here comes the tribe in two busloads. They were beautiful with the feathers and beads. There was a young fella, obviously a college graduate, who was their spokesman. (Director) Spence Bennet says, 'We want the Indians to do the war dance around Jocko.' This young man says, 'Just a minute' and he goes over to talk to the elders of the tribe. Comes back and says, 'It's been too long. They don't remember the war dance.' (Laughs) Spence says, 'What dance do they remember?' 'How about the corn dance?' Spence says, 'Great! Do the corn dance, whatever.' So all the women line up on one side and the men on the other and they're bobbin'

up and down. Spence says, 'That's the corn dance?' 'Yeah.' 'What else you got?' (Laughs) 'How 'bout the rain dance?' Spence says, 'Fine. Do the rain dance.' That didn't work. They ended up putting the warbonnets on some of the other actors and they danced around. The Indians just sat in the background nodding a bit."

Submit your questions to these serial stars for the next and future issues of SR.

Ralph Hodges
John Hart
Louise Currie
House Peters Jr.
Adrian Booth
Lois Hall
Sammy McKim
Helen Talbot
Mary Ellen Kay
Jane Randolph
Peggy Stewart
Frankie Thomas
Vivian Austin Coe
Earl Bellamy

Marion Shilling
Robert Clarke
Tommy Farrell
Carole Mathews
Pamela Blake
Dick Jones
Myron Heasley
Sam Edwards
Jane Adams
Danny Morton
Ann Kutherford
Steve Mitchell
Ray Boyle (aka
Dirk London)

All these stars will readily answer your questions via the pages of SERIAL REPORT.



Noel Lane Neill has written her biography, T R U T H , JUSTICE AND THE AMERICAN WAY. Although SR has not yet obtained a copy—it's on order—at press time, we wanted to make you aware of it. We will be reviewing it in the next issue of SR. Meantime, for those who can't wait—it's \$28.95 ppd. Nicholas Lawrence Books, 932 Clover Ave., Canon City, CO 81212 or if ordered from Jim Nolt, 22 N. Walnut St. #7, Lititz, PA 17543, your copy will be autographed by both Noel Neill and Larry Ward who co-wrote the authorized bio.



DVD

SERIALS

W h i l e Alpha, Image and others are releasing a n y public domain serials on DVD, VCI continues to lead the way with Columbia, Universal and Republic releases of "Secret Agent X-9" ('37 and '45), "Drums of Fu Manchu" ('40), "Jungle Jim" ('37), "Flash Gordon Conquers the Universe" ('40), "The Phantom" ('43) and "Mandrake the Magician" ('39), all \$29.99 each. Many others on VHS are \$14.00. VCI, 11333 E. 60th Pl., Tulsa, OK 74146. (800) 331-4077 <www.vci.entertainment.com> Incidentally, most serial aficionados will certainly want both versions of "Secret Agent X-9", but if you have to pick one, go for the Lloyd Bridges '45 version which has a far better story-line, better action and a far superior cast.

CHAP. 12 - BIG GUN RUSILLADE!



In the '37 version, aside from Jean Rogers and Henry Brandon, the cast, especially lead Scott Kolk, is quite weak, making this an instantly forgettable chapterplay. On the other hand, in the '45 version, Bridges is already demonstrating his star qualities. Backed by the solid

support of Jan Wiley, Keye Luke, Samuel S. Hinds (with eyes in the back of his head), the menacing Cy Kendall and especially the superb work of Victoria Horne as Nabura, Japan's top female spy, this is a cliffhanger in which you can't wait for the next chapter. (I'm on Ep. 7 as I write.) In addition, the cast is peopled by dozens of serial favorites: I. Stanford Jolley, Gene Roth, Edward Howard, Ed Cobb, John Merton, Mauritz Hugo, Budd Buster, Jack Rockwell, George Chesebro, George Eldredge, Stanley Price, etc. One interesting note about the '37 version, Michael Blake tells me "Secret Agent X-9" was his father's (Larry Blake) first job after signing with Universal. "They used the serial to get his feet wet before putting him in 'The Road Back' ('37), with John King ("Ace Drummond"), the usually forgotten sequel to "All Quiet On the Western Front".



The Misfits rock group (SR Ch. 43, pg. 2) have now issued a 7" tall, full color (red/grey) bust in the likeness of The Crimson Ghost—whom they have "borrowed" for their logo on various items.

This fiendish bust features a hole in the back of the head for a votive tealight to be placed. \$13.99. (800) 658-3323 for catalog.

What we wrote about the restoration of "Daredevils of the West" in SR Ch. 39, pg. 3, still holds true. Jerry Rosenthal, president of Sagebrush Ent., once again tells us they're ready to "rebuild" the classic Republic serial "as quickly as Paramount (who absorbed Republic's library a while back) will let us." A contact at Paramount told him it's the "damn attorneys" that are dragging their feet.



SHOENBERGER ON SERIALS

by Jim Shoenberger

For those sainted readers who have followed this column over the years, I am known for extolling the virtues of original, imaginative cliffhanger endings. Subsequently, it was quite a shock to my sensibilities to view the Republic serial "Government Agents Vs. Phantom Legion", a 12 chapter '51 release. As I watched each succeeding episode's climax, I

found myself mentally identifying the name of the serial from which this footage was being re-used. Don't get me wrong, these same scenes were quite exciting the first time I saw them, so it was fun seeing some of the better ones over again. I even understood why I was viewing this repeat footage. It was a simple matter of economics. With each passing year the entertainment upstart called television was making increasingly rapid inroads on the revenue acquired by the rental of motion pictures to theatres. One of the biggest clues to Republic's efforts to save money was to be found in each episode's opening credits. This was the identity of the script writer. Since the year of '50 starting with "Invisible Monster", all subsequent new serial releases had been written by a single individual: Ronald Davidson. During the golden age of Republic serials, '37 through '45,

cliffhangers like "Masked Marvel" ('43) and "Captain America" ('44) had as many as seven writers assigned to scripts. This may well explain why Davidson's supply of fresh ideas had begun to diminish! He was probably relieved when the producer suggested he work in as many cliffhangers as possible from previous serials. Therefore, it's hardly surprising several of the stock footage endings were taken from serials on which Davidson was one of the contributing writers, specifically "Mysterious Dr. Satan", "Dick Tracy Vs. Crime, Inc.", "Spy Smasher" and "Captain America". To add to my annoyance, the traditionally long-plot-developing first chapter now had a standard screening policy of 20 minutes. This studio policy began with Ch. 1 of "Phantom Rider" ('46). However, the practice of the 13 minute 20 second interior episode running time began three serials earlier with "Manhunt of Mystery Island". In this cliffhanger Ch. 2-8 each ran a total of 14 minutes and either 26 or 27 seconds. Then, all of a sudden in Ch. 9 ("The Fatal Flood"), the length is reduced to the 13:20 length. It remained that way for the next decade until Republic's last serial release in '55. As a point of information, almost all of the first 21 Republic serial releases had a screen time of approximately half an hour for their chapter ones. Commencing with

Intrigue and Suspense!

GOVERNMENT AGENTS VS. PHANTOM LEGION

MAJOR RED - NEW DICK TRACY - NEW PHANTOM RIDER - NEW GERT
 Starting Next 2 Weeks - Screen by Ronald Davidson
 A REPUBLIC SERIAL IN 12 CHAPTERS

"Jungle Girl" ('41), the running time dipped below 30 minutes never to return. Now let's examine "Government Agents Vs. Phantom Legion" for stock footage comparisons. Ch. 1, "River of Fire": The Hero, actor Walter Reed, is pursuing the bad guys in an underground tunnel on a handcar. The heavies are trying to outdistance him on their own handcar and dump punctured gasoline tins on the tracks behind them, igniting the flammable liquid and causing a wall of flames to engulf Reed's handcar and detonate the cases of hand grenades on it. (Stock footage from "Spy Smasher" ['42] Ch. 1 "America Beware".)

Ch. 2, "The Stolen Corpse": Reed, speeding in a pursuit of a morgue wagon with a stolen body, swerves to avoid a stretcher thrown in the path of his car and plunges into a rapidly flowing river. (Footage from "Black Widow" ['47] Ch. 10 entitled [surprise] "The Stolen Corpse".)

Ch. 3, "The Death Drop": In an effort to warn the engineer of a rapidly moving train of a plot to dynamite the tracks, Reed overtakes it in a plane. Unable to make the engineer understand the impending peril, Reed parachutes out further down the line hoping to stop the train while on the ground. But a wind change carries him directly into the path of the iron juggernaut. (Footage from "Dick Tracy Vs. Crime, Inc. ['41] Ch. 8 "Train of



Doom".) Chapters 4 and 5 will be discussed later in this article.

Ch. 6, "Mechanical Homicide": This serial's lead villain is a man of mystery known only as The Voice. When one of the members of a small group of businessmen Reed is working for defies him, The Voice decides to make an example. He has his men load explosives on a remote controlled truck. Reed tries to intervene but is knocked unconscious and placed in the cab of the deadly vehicle. As the truck speeds toward the home of the potential victim, Reed awakens as it nears the house. Unable to turn the wheel, he desperately smashes the electronic receiver. He swerves the truck from hitting the house but crashes into the garage amid a terrific explosion. (Footage from "Captain America" ['44] Ch. 4 "Preview of Murder").

Ch. 7, "Flaming Highway": The Voice's men murder a witness who could have identified their mysterious leader. Escaping in a fuel truck with Reed in close pursuit, as Reed's car begins to gain on them they open the flush valve on the tanker sending gasoline pouring out onto the highway in front of Reed's car. The gasoline trail is ignited with



Reed's automobile engulfed in flames, which then explodes. (Footage taken from "Mysterious Dr. Satan" ['40] Ch. 4 "The Human Bomb"). Ch. 8, "Sea Saboteurs": While attempting to thwart The Voice's latest scheme, Reed is captured and taken aboard a launch by The

Voice's men. Trying to escape, he is knocked out. The Coast Guard Patrol boat challenges the fleeing vessel to stop. When it does not, the pursuing ship opens fire. The Voice's men leap overboard leaving the unconscious Reed behind. The large Coast Guard cutter rams into the smaller boat demolishing it. (Footage taken from "Dick Tracy Vs. Crime, Inc." [41] Ch. 7 "Sea Racketeers").

Ch. 9, "Peril Underground": Reed is captured by Regan and Cady, two of The Voice's men. However, he is able to turn the tables on his captors and they flee to an old mine with Reed following. Knowing they are being pursued by Reed, they set a trap in the mine tunnel. They overturn a dump car under an ore chute which will slow Reed down as he attempts to get past it. As Reed reaches the barrier, Regan pulls the trip-cord releasing a thunderous avalanche of rocks. (Footage taken from "King Of the Forest Rangers" [46] Ch. 4 "Deluge of Destruction".)



Chapters 4 and 5 substituted a variation of previous cliffhangers rather than actual stock footage. In Ch. 4, "Doorway to Doom", Reed

sets a trap for Cady and Regan at the association office where Reed works. Regan and Cady are rifling the safe as Reed approaches with his shadow appearing on the frosted glass office door. Guns drawn, the Voice's henchmen blast away, shattering the glass pane. In Ch. 5, "Deadline For Disaster", the heroine (played by Mary Ellen Kay) is captured and taken to a barn. Reed follows and in a hand to hand fight with Regan and Cady is pushed in the cliffhanger ending against a protruding pickax blade. This idea was taken from "Adventures of Frank and Jesse James" ('48) Ch. 10, "The Stolen Body". The cliffhangers for episodes 10 and 11 were familiar and unimpressive. Ch. 10 ends with Reed's car being forced off a mountain road. With so many such serial climaxes of this type I couldn't tell if stock footage was implemented. If I were to guess I would say "yes." Ch. 11's closing moments have Reed being pushed out of a building's 5th floor open window. This appeared to be new footage. Although much of the action I had seen before, it was a joy once again to watch the special effects of the Lydecker brothers. Stock footage remains a big commercial business even today with specialty stores that deal constantly with motion pictures and television. And now, a tip of my cap to the man, Jack Mathis. His wonderfully researched books on Republic serials are an enduring source of reference and pleasure.

SERIAL BOO BOOS

In Ch. 2 of Republic's "Dangers of the Canadian Mounted", following a fight in the cave, Jim Bannon (on horseback) pursues Anthony Warde who is in a car. Jim does not have on his hat. However (in stock footage used from "King of the Mounties") he is wearing a hat as he rides.

COLUMBIA CLIFFHANGER CASTS



Actor	Character
Victor Jory	Lamont Cranston
Victor Jory	Lin Chang
Victor Jory	The Shadow
Veda Ann Borg	Margot Lane
Roger Moore	Harry Vincent
Robert Fiske	Stanford Marshall
J. Paul Jones	Turner
Gordon Hart	Albert Hill
Charles K. French	Joseph Rand
Lee Shumway	Frank Milford
Griff Barnett	Steven Prescott
(Lionel Backus?)	Kent
Jack Ingram	Flint
Charles Hamilton	Roberts
Edward Peil Sr.	Inspector Joe Cardona
Frank LaRue	Commissioner
Phillip Ahn	Ralph Weston
Eddie Fetherston	Wu Yung
Charles King	Williams
Murdock McQuarrie	Russell
	Richards, Rand's Butler (Ch. 2,3)
Kit Guard	Clark
Richard Botiller	Green
Constantine Romanoff	Harvey
Cy Shindell	Streeter
Edward LeSaint	Dr. Grant (Ch. 9,10)
Lew Sergeant	Jennings
Marin Sais	Nurse Plunkett
Charles Sullivan	Steve
Jack Perrin	Jack, Airplane Mechanic

Joe Calts	One-eyed Man of Anchor Street Adams
Harry Tenbrook	Sparks
Franklyn Farnum	Policeman (Ch. 1)
Kernan Cripps	Henchman (Ch. 7)
Frank Hagney	Judge (Ch. 1)
Lloyd Ingraham	Taylor (Ch. 2,3)
Jack Rice	Street Beggar (Ch. 10)
Budd Buster	Newspaper seller (Ch. 10)
George Morrell	Jimmy, Cobalt Club attendant (Ch. 1, 4)
George Turner	Police Dispatcher
Charles McMurphy	Policeman at Oriental Bazaar (Ch. 2, 11)
Jack Kennedy	Police Guard (Ch. 3)
Charles McAvoxy	George De Normand Getaway Driver (Ch. 5)
George Magril	Henchman (Ch. 7)
Al Herman	Mallory, Train Conductor (Ch. 8)
Buel Bryant	Kirk, Intern (Ch. 9)
??	Bennett, Intern (Ch. 9, 10)
Lou Calts	Lew, Intern (Ch. 9, 10)
Tom London	Radio Truck Driver (Ch. 12)
Frank Hilliard	Truck Driver (Ch. 13)
??	Cafe Waiter (Ch. 14)

(Hal Polk, Jim Stringham, Ed Billings, Boyd Magers contributed to this listing.) Jim Stringham adds, "I enjoyed 'The Shadow' serial more than any other movies made about the radio and pulp character, far more than the recent big budget version. It's fast moving with Victor Jory a perfect choice for the title role. If it was illogical and often repetitious, that has been known to happen in serials. Couldn't help noticing the same debris seemed to crash down on the Shadow over and over. Also wondered why he would surprise the bad guys but just stand there and laugh instead of getting the drop on them."



WORTH ANOTHER LOOK

by Ken Weiss

Like all the readers of SR, I've seen a few serials over the years. Like most readers, I've decided which I think are the "best" (good script, action, production), such as "Jungle Girl", "Flash Gordon", "Daredevils of the Red Circle", "Adventures of Captain Marvel", "Perils of Nyoka"—you know the list. But when I think about the ones I actually go back to and watch with the greatest frequency, it's none of the above. No, instead it's two serials that don't appear on anyone's best list (not even mine), one of which appears on quite a few worst lists (to use a phrase Jim Stringham abhors). The two serials are "Last of the Mohicans" (Mascot '32) and "Clutching Hand" (Stage and Screen '36). The former because I really enjoy it (despite a major deficiency), the latter because it's the funniest serial I've ever seen, it always leaves me smiling. "Last of the Mohicans" has an almost mythic quality about it (its images stick with you), and a fabulous cast. The old James Fenimore Cooper novel had

been made into a movie several times previously; in 1909 D. W. Griffith did a one-reel adaptation, "Leatherstocking", Pat Powers and Thanauser both did versions in 1911, and Maurice Tourneur

and Clarence Brown co-directed another version in 1920. The Tourneur-Brown production (restored a few years ago) is justifiably famous for its beautiful photography, for Wallace Beery as Magua and for Boris Karloff's appearance in a small role. The Mascot version is a worthy successor to that Tourneur-Brown version, and in some respects is (arguably, I'll admit) even better. Visually, the serial is probably the most beautiful, most carefully photographed of all the Mascots and was the studio's "big-budget" (—for Mascot) serial for '32. There's a lot of attention to detail and an attempt at historical accuracy in terms of sets and costumes, which are all first rate. The Mohican and Huron huts and lodges (exteriors and interiors) are reasonably accurate (no teepees), to an extent usually ignored in serials. Harry Carey gets lines like "I mustn't tarry," and Walter Miller gets to wear a wavy white wig. Almost all of it was shot on location—California hills and mountains, and Sherwood Lake and the Kern River for water and canoe scenes, according to Jon Tuska's excellent **THE VANISHING LEGION**.

Most of the topography could pass for Mid-Atlantic. A lot of the shots are from on high, with broad vistas of hills and forests in the background. Sites seem to have been selected for their beauty or grandeur,



Harry Carey Sr. and Walter Miller.

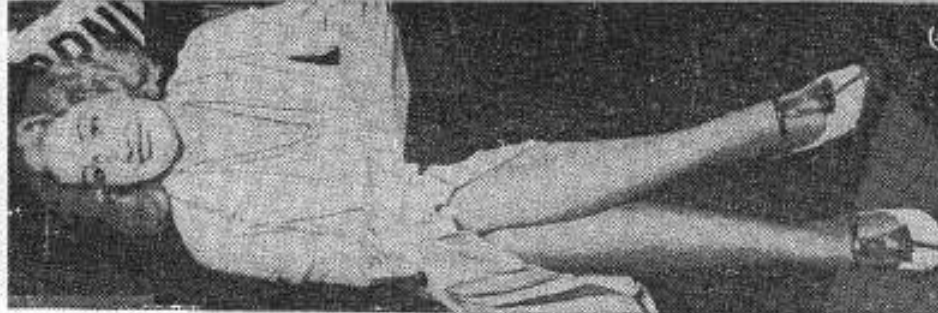
and the shot composition and lighting are obviously influenced by the Tourneur-Brown version. The cinematography is excellent, with a lot of care taken to get a variety of shots—closeups, medium and long shots—at different angles to cover, for example, the canoe chase in Ch. 1 and the subsequent fight between Major Duncan Heyward (Walter Miller, in his last role as a romantic lead in serials) and the Hurons, and later canoe chases, or the attack on Fort William Henry (Ch. 5)—suggesting production values far above standards usually set by Mascot and at least equal to B-studios like Columbia and Universal. When the ceiling collapses on Col. Munro and his men in the attack on the fort, it's pretty convincing. The serial's opening scene is powerful: Magua (Bob Kortman) describing to Mohican tribesmen how the British whipped him—a Huron chief—like a dog, as he tries to incite them to war against the British, and Hawkeye's (Harry Carey) timely entrance and denunciation of Magua's story. It sets the scene and establishes motivation and character. Carey is perfect as Hawkeye. He is calm, sincere, fittingly laconic, cuts a memorable figure in his coonskin cap and leather-frilled garments, and exudes dependability. It's hard to think of anyone who could have done a better job. Ex-superstar Hobart Bosworth was cast as Chingachgook—for some reason called "the Sagamore" in this version. It's an odd bit of casting but Bosworth is fine, and looks pretty fit for a man in his mid-sixties. Junior Coghlan played Uncas. He looks as much like a Native American as, say, Billy Benedict, but nonetheless gives an earnest and totally winning performance. Edwina Booth is Cora (or "dark hair" as Magua calls her—she had to dye her hair for the part). Co-star Lucile Browne (Alice) didn't

think much of Booth's acting ability, and thought she was "shallow." Author Jon Tuska says Booth had been having personal and business problems, was deep in debt, feeling despondent, and her "performance deteriorated even more from her woodenness in 'The Vanishing Legion' ('30)." If that's true, it sure was a lucky break for the serial, because her haughtiness and cool detachment are perfect for the part. (See sidebar.—ed.) When Cora threatens to kill Magua, or volunteers to be burned at the stake, or places herself in front of loaded muzzles, you get the sense she ain't kidding. Then there's Bob Kortman, whose acting ability has also been criticized. But again, I can't think of anyone who could have done a better job. Kortman's Magua is easily the most unforgettable aspect of the serial and emerges as a kind of icon: when I think of this serial, his gaunt face is the first thing I visualize. It was, I suspect, the meatiest role Kortman ever had. He gets to act up a storm (he's perfectly adequate), talk a lot and make impassioned speeches, certainly a rarity given the roles he usually played. He even gets to deliver a few sly gag lines, as when he's asked by his former girlfriend Red Wing (Joan Gale) if he intends to marry Cora. "It needs no witch doctor to answer that," he replies. There are lots of familiar faces: Yakima Canutt, Mischa Auer, Edward Hearn, but special mention must be made of Walter McGrail as Dulac, the treacherous Canuck. As is the case for Kortman, this is a meaty part for McGrail, and he has a field day as (in my opinion) the most slippery, devious, fast-thinking, conniving, opportunistic, inventive, glib villain ever to appear in serials. This guy can talk his way out of anything, and does. It becomes increasingly enjoyable to watch him ooze his way

through tight spots...at least till a long-distance shot from Hawkeye's rifle puts an end to his exploits in the last chapter. As Tuska has pointed out, the last few chapters move along at an exciting, brisk clip, gathering momentum as it reaches its conclusion. The entire serial is better paced than most, a tribute to its directors, Reeves Eason and Ford Beebe. (See WC #54 for career article.) The serial (or at least my tape of it) does have one major defect: musical accompaniment. (It could not under any circumstances be called a score.) My video is one "copyrighted" by Burbank Video, so the following comments might apply only to it, and not necessarily to the version released by Mascot. (Reader feedback will be appreciated.) The opening title and credit music sounds like a stock score, typical opening music of poverty row serials. But from then on the accompaniment consists almost exclusively of two classical music pieces, one a rousing action theme, the other a lovely romantic piece. These two pieces are used whenever music is deemed necessary. Which would be okay if they matched what was happening on screen, but this is not the case. They're used almost randomly (in fact, after a few chapters the action music vanishes), with the lovely romantic melody being heard as Miller and the two women go over a waterfall in a canoe, as they're trapped in a burning cabin, as savage hand-to-hand combat takes place, as they're being burned at the stake, and so on. But it would take more than inappropriate music to spoil this great serial, which is well worth another look.

Regarding "Perils of the Yukon" and "Around the World in 18 Days": it was William Desmond and not Dustin Farnum as the lead in both (as corrected last issue by Jim Stringham

and Ed Billings). The original blunder was all mine. As for "The Clutching Hand"? We'll deal with that immortal classic in SR Ch. 47.



Ken Weiss and Jon Tuska allude to Edwina Booth's "personal and business problems" during the making of "Last of the Mohicans". Released in '32, the serial was made in late '31 at which time she'd been extensively involved in a \$50,000 alienation of affections suit brought against her by Susette Duncan, wife of Duncan Renaldo, with whom Booth had filmed "Trader Horn" ('31) in Africa. At one point in the trial, Booth was forced to say "no" 18 times in succession when questioned by her attorney. After only a couple more screen roles, the Provo, UT, born Edwina Woodruff left the scandal of Hollywood behind her and became an employee at a Mormon Temple in Hollywood. Born in 1909, she died in 1991.

SERIAL HEAVIES



Square-jawed Lane Bradford learned his dirty deeds from one of the best serial and B-western badmen—his father, John Merton. Born Myrtland LaVarre Jr. August 29, 1922, in New York City, his father was Myrthland V. LaVarre who changed his screen name to John Merton (1901-1959). As John was a stage actor, the family came west in 1932. Lane started to do extra and stuntman work circa 1939. Lane worked extensively in B-westerns at PRC, Columbia and Republic with his career picking up considerably in the mid '40s, at which time he can be spotted in "Son of the Guardsman" ('46) for Sam Katzman at Columbia. Beginning in 1948, he became one of Republic's regular stable of western heavies



as well as making one serial a year at the studio for the next six years (except '53) starting with "Adventures of Frank and Jesse James" ('48). Lane was at his best in "James Brothers of Missouri" ('49), "Invisible Monster" ('50), "Don Daredevil Rides Again" ('51), "Zombies of the Stratosphere" ('52) and "Man With the Steel Whip" ('54). Lane's big love in life was boats. He first built an 18 ft. outrigger canoe and sailed it from his home in Malibu. Next he bought a 26 ft. ocean going Folk Boat and later a P-28 which he took to his beloved Hawaii where he lived his last few years until his premature death from a heart attack June 7, 1973, at only 50.



THE OLD ONES AND THE NEW ONES

by Jim Stringham

Pulp reprints, vintage radio and TV shows, movies on DVD, all keep life interesting. So much "stuff" is coming out, there isn't time to enjoy it all. "The Shadow Knows!"

For one thing, he knows he is not really Lamont Cranston, at least in the magazine stories. Many of his pulp exploits are finally available in full size reprints, with color covers. More



promised by publisher Girasol Collectables <www.girasolcollectables.com> Street and Smith wished to establish copyright for the radio narrator of stories from their magazines, known only as The Shadow. Walter Gibson was chosen to write a novel for what was intended as a one shot publication. An economy measure was the use of a not very effective previously used cover picture from their files. The issue sold out. Therefore, hundreds more followed, with Gibson (writing as Maxwell Grant) usually doing the lead story. Other mags featuring, and named for, a single character quickly appeared. Gibson's Shadow often used the identity of the real Cranston to take advantage of his connections. In an early faceoff, he told Cranston that, if challenged, he would be the one accepted as authentic. No real identity was given for this Living Shadow, but there were hints he was a war hero whose face had been destroyed in action,

allowing him to build new features with makeup when needed. Years later, it was decided he was really explorer Kent Allard. I always thought that was a letdown. Anyway, these early stories are great fun. They are reprinted on top quality paper. Goodlife TV has replaced the Nostalgia Channel, and

was recently added to our cable package. It mostly features paid programming ("Call within the next ten minutes, and Chef Tony will send you an extra knife absolutely free!") but old TV series ("Bronco", "Cheyenne", "Combat", "Hawaiian Eye", "Lone Wolf", "Maverick", "77 Sunset Strip", etc.) are shown weekly. Most seem complete (unlike TV Land), although the closing scene of a recent "Lone Wolf" had obviously been chopped off. There's a serial episode every Sunday, currently "Adventures of the Flying Cadets" which seems to be mostly dialogue between the stock action sequences, but has its moments. Couldn't help but notice the same cliffside avalanche appeared in both "Cadets" and the 1945 "Secret Agent X-9". Goodlife's movies include some great stuff, especially the westerns. They have titles not seen elsewhere, even on the excellent Westerns Channel. We get the Range Busters, Rough Riders and other series from independent companies. One recent presentation was "The Light of Western Stars" with Victor Jory supported by many favorites. VCI is advertising "Mandrake the Magician" on DVD. It hasn't appeared in other catalogues yet, though, and they have been known to offer serials months before they are actually available. Finally, John Wayne's "The Comancheros" has been announced as available on DVD. Hope it's widescreen. Saw that one at a Schofield Barracks theatre—

twice—and enjoyed every minute of it. It's fast, funny, features a great cast, and filled the whole big screen with large scale action sequences. It would be a shame if those big rangers/Indians battles had to be cut down for a full screen format. It's one of the best late John Waynes.

CHAPTERPLAYER

QUOTES

Glenn Strange regarding "Hurricane Express" (32): "We made most of it up on Mulholland Drive and over on Sepulveda Blvd.

There wasn't anything out there then but orange orchards and lemons and what not. We'd shoot late at night, dubbing the sound later. They had lights that looked kinda like a fryin' pan. Dark as pitch but these are for daylight shots. I'd stand here and hold the light in John Wayne's face...the camera over here—'yakety, yakety, yak'—then I'd get in his spot. They wouldn't change the camera. He'd get over here and I'd get where he was. He'd hold the light in my face (and I'd do dialogue). Now the wreck of the plane—remember (the plot) was a plane trying to run a railroad out of business. We had one of these old Tri-motor Fords. We used a bunch of this old corrugated iron, piled it up on the railroad track off Sepulveda Blvd., put a lot of smoke screens under it and that was the crash. (Laughs) We were down at the old Glendale Airport and they'd taxi—they never did get off the ground. We'd lean out the windows with the machine guns—acka-acka-acka—then they'd cut to the plane in the air somewhere." (Excerpt from Glenn Strange 62 min. interview taped in '65, now available as a bonus feature on Image's DVD "Tales of Frankenstein".)



CLIFFHANGER COMMENTARY

by Bruce Deffman

For those under the impression the so-called *buddy* action film began with such titles as "Magnificent 7", "The Professionals" or even "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid", it might come as somewhat of a surprise to learn the heyday of this sort of fare was really the '30s and '40s when assorted groups of good guys such as The Three Mesquiteers, The Range Busters and Rough Riders hooked up in B-western programmers to unite against a myriad of villains and evil schemes. In serials, heroes generally tended to be loner types only occasionally aided by a male sidekick (sometimes comedic, sometimes not) to help them over the rough spots with a fetching damsel in distress on the sidelines waiting to be rescued. Occasionally, there were a few exceptions to this tried and true structure, instances when more than one hero was called for and Republic's "Daredevils of the Red Circle" is one, if not the best, example of this. The "Daredevils" of the title were three terrific actors and action players all of whom, at one time or another in their busy film

careers, were linked with the serial form. Future cliffhanger veteran Charles Quigley ("Crimson Ghost", "Superman", "Iron Claw") was top-billed fol-

lowed by Herman Brix ("Hawk of the Wilderness", "New Adventures of Tarzan", "Fighting Devil Dogs") and, lastly, the great Dave Sharpe who would lend his remarkable athletic talents to so many Republic cliffhangers mainly as a stuntman but sometimes as an actor as well. Legend has it because of his star status and insurance issues Republic wouldn't allow Dave to perform his own stunts in "Daredevils", but I'm pretty certain I spotted him doing some patented Sharpe leaps during a couple of strenuous scenes. In any case, the three leads have good chemistry and work well as a team. The Daredevils are circus performers out to avenge the death of Quigley's kid brother, killed during a fire set by a criminal who goes by his old prison number, 39013—played with scene stealing relish by the cadaverous and ghoulish Charles Middleton (whose very voice scared me when I was a kid)—and who has vowed to destroy his former partner, Granville. 39013 captures Granville (portrayed by the wonderfully mannered British character actor Miles Mander) and using a life-like mask impersonates him successfully enough to fool even his own niece, Blanche (future doomed star Carole Landis). For 15 whirlwind chapters, 39013 throws everything he can at



Charles Quigley, Bruce Bennett, Dave Sharpe.

ing time to breathe between athletic confrontations with Granville's minions. If it's short on brains and long on muscle it's also a cliffhanger lover's dream and not just because of all the great serial conclusions. (Who could ever forget Quigley on his motorcycle trying to outrun a flood roaring through a tunnel?) Like a lot of the best serials, you could lift the cliffhanger endings and still have a nifty, well-crafted B thriller. Ace helmetsmen William Witney and John English do one of their finest directorial jobs setting pace and turning out the thrills, with William Lava's brassy and muscular score perfectly complimenting the action. I'm also fond of this serial, as well as a dozen other Republic products produced during the same period, because of all the wonderful outdoor shooting which highlights many Hollywood and San Fernando Valley locations (before they were turned into strip malls and Radio Shacks). I love the factories and refineries, oilrigs and docks they used. I also enjoy the fact Republic allowed for a whole gang of thugs to back up the main villains, not like later chapterplays where the hero was often up against just two heavies over and over. Supporting players here include C. Montague Shaw, George Chesebro, Ray Miller, John Merton and Raymond Bailey. Oh yes, and Tuffie the dog playing (brilliantly) himself. "Daredevils" is unquestionably one of the great cliffhangers of the screen. If you're a fan of the genre it's hard to find fault with it. It's a roller coaster of action, a rip snorter of thrilling escapes boasting a great cast and solid production values.

DAREDEVILS
OF THE
RED CIRCLE

A Republic Serial in 12 Chapters

THOSE GREAT SERIAL LOCATIONS

by Tinsley Vorbrough

They're not called "Cliffhangers" for nothing. Serial chapters often climax with hero or heroine facing a deadly plunge-down an elevator or mine shaft, off the top of a building, from an airplane sans parachute, off a dam (or dam spillway) or bridge, or...from a cliff. A cliff just off the Santa Susanna Pass Road on the lower Iverson Ranch near Chatsworth became undoubtedly the most familiar in serialdom. In Ep. 7 of the terrific "Perils of Nyoka" ('42), Vultura's ape Satan chases Nyoka (Kay Aldridge) from his mistress' temple to certain death off that precipice, thereafter dubbed Nyoka Cliff (below). As those who



have been there know, getting to the cliff's most prominent and highest point is no easy task, so movie-makers placed a footbridge across a wide break in the rock surface leading to the point. That bridge could often be seen in profile in distant shots of Nyoka Cliff. In an exciting Ep. 6 scene (though not its cliffhanger) for "Crimson Ghost" ('46), stars Charles Quigley and Linda Stirling (and their stunt doubles) chase a heavy across that bridge during a fight that ends with the henchie dropping to his death

from the cliff. Sometimes serial and feature crews used a somewhat safer section of the cliff rather than its highest point for cliffhanger endings. See, for example, Ep. 12 of "Purple Monster Strikes" ('45), featuring a fight between Linda Stirling and Mary Moore, as well as the final episode fight in Republic's "Phantom Rider" ('46). Nyoka Cliff was situated high above a famous curving stagecoach road in the lower Iverson gorge where, among other landmarks, the Lone Ranger Rock was located. West across the gorge is another cliff, actually a plateau at the top of a hill on that side of the gorge. The plateau is east of the Garden of the Gods and its Sphinx Rock, the most famous Iverson rock formations. The plateau was used for cliffhangers in many serials. At the end of Ep. 7 in "Zorro's Black Whip" ('44), a heavy throws a barrel of explosives at The Whip, plunging her to certain death—well, at least until the next chapter. On at least one occasion, a cliffhanger featured a fight on a cable supposedly suspended between a tall base on the plateau and Nyoka Cliff. In

"Mandrake the Magician" ('39), hero Warren Hull (actually stunt ace Dave Sharpe) climbs the platform, then leaps from it to the cable car after a fleeing heavy. Unfortunately, the ensuing fight and plunge from the cable car take place via back projection and a miniature either filmed for "Mandrake" or stock footage taken from an earlier title. Frequently, flights filmed on the plateau, which

offered more space and stability for stuntpeople, actors, and crew, climaxed with a fall from the Nyoka Cliff across the gorge. The two cliffs "collaborated" in other scenes as well. Both Bill Elliott's "Valley of Vanishing Men" ('42) and Kay Aldridge's "Haunted Harbor" ('44) featured chapter endings in which dastardly villains pushed tall ladders away from Nyoka Cliff as our heroes were attempting to climb them from the stagecoach road below. But shots picturing the top of the cliff in those scenes actually used the plateau across the gorge. A partially real, partly fake cliff at Lake Sherwood near Thousand Oaks also regularly appeared in serials and features. Situated next to the lake's curving dam, which provided an excellent setting for one of the more exciting scenes in "Adventures of Captain Marvel" ('41), the inlet below the cliff was typically the pool into which our heroes plunged when their not entirely trusty steeds failed to make a (process shot) jump across a narrow gorge (e.g. Ep. 10 of "Adventures of Red Ryder" '40, and Ep. 6 of "King of the Texas Rangers" '41). At Kernville, near Bakersfield, the Kern River's lagoon and nearby swinging bridge also often hosted cliffhangers. Mascot's "Vanishing Legion" ('31) included a plunge into the lagoon and the studio's "Lightning Warrior" ('31) featured not only horse and wagon falls from cliffs into the Kern River, but also a hand-over-hand rope crossing. Ep. 4 of Columbia's "Jack Armstrong" ('47) has our heroes trapped on the swinging bridge, which ultimately collapses, in miniature, into a chasm. A cliff high above Big Bear Lake furnishes the setting for the exciting Ep. 11 ending to "King of the Mounties" ('42), when a heavy rams his car into the boulder on which Allan Lane,

returning fire, is perched, dropping boulder and mountie to...a lake below, as fans saw the next week. That great scene was later reused in Ep. 11 of "Canadian Mounties Vs. Atomic Invaders" ('53), which like other later Republic mountie chapterplays, relied heavily on the two outstanding Allan Lane titles. Other cliffs and hills also furnished sites for cliffhanger endings but these, to me, are standout favorites.

EPISODES

by Tom and Jim

Goldrop

Kathryn Adams co-starred with Donald Woods and Billy Halop, Robert Armstrong, Eduardo Cianelli and Reed Hadley in Universal's 1941 serial, "Sky Raiders". The advertisements for this serial read, "The most sensational sky-serial ever made," and "Amazing air adventures as heroes battle spies in the sky." The plot for the story (screenplay by Clarence Upson Young and Paul Huston, based on an original story by Elliot Gibbons) involved foreign agents trying to steal a new pursuit plane developed by a World War I flying ace. Henry MacRae (who produced the "Flash Gordon" serials) produced with two directors for the 12 chapter serial, Ford Beebe and Ray Taylor. Kathryn Adams was born July 15, 1920, in Minnesota, making her film debut in 1939 opposite Ginger Rogers and Tim Holt in "Fifth-Avenue Girl". Regarding her work in "Sky Raiders", Kathryn told us, "The serial was, as the kids say today, 'a hoot' all the way through. It really is an historic document, isn't it? The techniques of filming have changed so much over the years that 'Sky Raiders' seems like a contribution to the Antique Road show, which is the way I felt about

myself when I attended my first film festival in Memphis. One of the reasons the serial was so much fun for me was because one of the producers, Don Brown, became a good friend and he would fill me in daily about how they would search for stock shots that fit the action, and then create the dialogue to match the stock shots. An example of this was the bear episode (Ch. 10). Actually, there wasn't a hair of a bear on the set, only when they cut the film, a stock shot was inserted of one lazy looking bear nibbling on a forest delight. End of episode: I am terrified and run like the wind to escape the unaware bear. In another episode the plane I was piloting in the San Bernardino Mountains crashes. End of episode. Beginning of next episode, I'm tripping through the forest with unmussed hair and, I believe, high heels, calling and calling, "Tim! Tim!" who also managed between episodes to escape the crash without a scratch. Chapter Eleven: Don Woods and I are co-piloting a plane over the Pacific Ocean on our way to Hawaii when the plane explodes in the air over the Pacific Ocean—stock shot of plane bursting into flames, disappearing into the ocean depths and leaving nothing but a faint oil slick. End of episode. Opening of final episode: Don Woods and I are sitting in the captain's quarters of a coast guard cutter, hair a bit damp and mussed, but looking quite unscathed. The Captain calmly asks, 'Captain Drayton, will

you be going on to Hawaii?' 'Yes, sir, as soon as the plane is repaired,' Captain Drayton answers. We do fly to Hawaii, return, are married, the villain caught, and all is well that ends well! End of serial! As far as my co-actors are concerned, all were warm, friendly, considerate. Donald Woods and I did several B-pictures together besides the serial and enjoyed working together. It was a good fit. The director, Ray Taylor, happened to be from Perham, MN, so we enjoyed one another. Not a single glitch that I can remember. It was a good experience and it has grown even better in looking back...one of the rewarding things about aging." Kathryn has one other serial to her credit, that being an unbillied bit in Ch. 1 of "Junior G-Men of the Air" in 1942.

CLASSIFIED ADS

(10¢ a word. Address on cover)

Vol. III of **FEATURE PLAYERS: STORIES BEHIND THE FACES** by Tom and Jim Goldrop details the lives, experiences and opinions of one director, Earl Bellamy, and 39 performers including Faith Domergue, Robert Knapp, Wright King, William Bryant, Jeff Corey, Marion Shilling, Jeremy Slate, George Wallace, Wally Cassell, Paul Picerni, Steve Mitchell, Andrew Duggan, Jason Evers, Jan Merlin, Michael Ansara, Warren Douglas, Beth Marion, John Hart, Tommy Farrell, Richard Emory, Robert Rockwell, Gregory Walcott, John Agar, Ed Kemmer and others. Ideal addition to the library of every film buff or historian. All stories based on personal interviews with the performers. Photos and film credit lists for each. Reduced to \$10 postpaid in U.S. Overseas, write for price. Tom and Jim Goldrop, PO Box 425, Ben Lomond, CA 95006. Or send SASE for list of performers. Vol. II still available, \$10 postpaid.

Cheat Endings!

Chapter 1 of "Red Rider" ends as a posse's horses trample over Buck Jones' fallen body. In Ch. 2, the horses stop before they ever reach Buck.



SERIAL CLIPPINGS

Serial articles continue in **BIG REEL**. "Masked Marvel", with much to do made about Tom Steele's anonymity, is featured in the (5/03) issue. The 6/03 issue praises James Horne's "Green Archer"...in particular the comic touches Horne brought to it, along with Victor Jory and James Craven's work. The 7/03 **BIG REEL** reminds serial watchers how low Republic had sunk by the time of "Invisible Monster". "Buck Rogers" and "Flash Gordon" are compared in the 8/03 issue. **Buster Crabbe**, "Tarzan the Fearless", and an interview with Bruce Bennett ("New Adventures of Tarzan") at 96...both in **FILMFAX #96** (April/May '03). **Don Terry's** serials remembered in **CLASSIC IMAGES #336** (6/03). **Noel Neill** with her new biography (**BIG REEL 7/03**). **The internet bi-weekly newsletter SCOOP** (V. 3 # 5, 7/3) contains features on the "The Spider" and "The Green Hornet". Subs by email are free and past issues can be downloaded from their archives at <http://scoop.diamondgalleries.com>

MEETING SERIAL STARS

ADRIAN BOOTH ("Captain America", "Daughter of Don Q", "Perils of Nyoka") is one of the honored guests during Western Legends Days in Kanab, UT, August 20-23. (800) 644-5094. **DICK JONES** will be at Gene Autry Film and Music Festival and Music Festival Sept. 25-28 in Gene Autry, OK. (580) 294-3047.

RALPH HODGES (left) ("Bruce Gentry", "Sea Hound", etc.)



attended the Memphis Film Festival in June. SR will have a lengthy interview with Hodges about exciting incidents on all his Sam Katzman serials in an upcoming SR.

ON THE SERIAL BOOKSHELF



Silent film historian George Katchmer died October 28, 1997, shortly after completing the research and writing of McFarland's recently published *A BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF SILENT FILM WESTERN ACTORS AND ACTRESSES*. After George's death, his son, John, took over the complex duties of editing and formatting the 488 page manuscript. Katchmer has included over 1,000 silent cowboys, leading ladies, heavies, sidekicks, townspeople and character players in this historic work which will undoubtedly become a well-thumbed major research tool for every western movie historian for many, many years to come. Dozens of serial references and players are included. George left no stone unturned in his search for life-story facts about these pioneer players. Every entry (ranging from a paragraph to a page) includes a detailed (as possible) biography, silent western (including western serials) filmography and usually a photo. Hundreds of these players worked on into talkies: Ernie Adams, Bob Kortman, Tom Mix, Dick Alexander, Jimmy Aubrey, Buzz Barton, Noah Beery Sr., Stanley Blystone, Buffalo Bill Jr., Yakima Canutt, Bud Osborne, Jack Hoxie, Reed Howes, Tom London—and scores more. So there's wonderful research and information here for talkie western and serial readers as well. SR's highest recommendation—goes on the A-book shelf! Indexed by film. \$95 plus \$4 postage. (Well worth it!) McFarland, Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640.

CHAPTER 13



Titian-haired beauty ANNE GWYNNE, 84, died March 31 at the Motion Picture Hospital in Woodland Hills, CA. She'd been living at the Motion Picture Home for the last several years since suffering a stroke. She suffered another stroke in late March. Born in Waco, TX, raised in San Antonio, Anne studied drama. When her family moved to L.A. in the late '30s, she obtained work as a model while appearing in Little Theatre work. Spotted by a talent scout, she was signed by Universal. Throughout the '40s Anne appeared in dozens of Universal westerns, comedies, horror films and serials. She freelanced in film and TV through the late '50s. She briefly revived her career in '69-'70 but, suffering from Bell's Palsy, was forced into retirement. She's Sonja in "Flash Gordon Conquers the Universe" and has a role in "Green Hornet" serial.



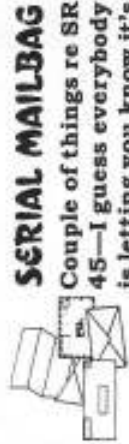
Film composer WALTER SCHARF, 92, died of heart failure at his Brentwood, CA, home February 24. Born in New York City, he began composing for the stage and relocated to Hollywood in 1930 where he either wrote music for or was musical director on hundreds of films and TV shows including many at Republic. Scharf assumed the administrative chair at Republic's music department when Cy Feuer went into WWII in '42. It was under Scharf's tenure that "Oklahoma"-style musical numbers were added to Roy Rogers' westerns. Jack Mathis, in his *REPUBLIC CONFIDENTIAL: THE STUDIO*, writes, "Scharf's colossal legacy at Republic was incalculable, not only

in the prestige his name and background lent to the studio but in the talented composers, song writers, musicians and other contributors he nurtured into full flower." Following the war, Cy Feuer was reinstated as head of Republic's music department in February '46. Scharf took the opportunity to move on to other ventures. While at Republic, Scharf contributed to many serials—"Secret Service In Darkest Africa", "Masked Marvel", "Haunted Harbor", "Zorro's Black Whip", "Captain America", "Tiger Woman", "Manhunt On Mystery Island", "Phantom Rider", "King of the Rocketmen".

Veteran heavy ANTHONY CARUSO, 88, died April 4 in his Brentwood, CA, home after a protracted illness. Born to Italian-American parents in Frankfort, IN, but reared in Long Beach, CA, Caruso was frequently cast as a Greek, Mexican, Spaniard or Indian in dozens of westerns and crime dramas. After attending Pasadena Playhouse, where he became friends with Alan Ladd who used Tony in 11 films, Caruso first appeared in "Northwest Mounted Police" ('40). Also early in his career, Caruso had a role in "The Phantom" ('43).



Child actor TOMMY RYAN, 80, died March 25 of heart failure after a long battle with diabetes. In a career that stretched from '32-'47, his only serial appearance was as a messenger in "Son of Zorro".



SERIAL MAILBAG
Couple of things re SR 45—I guess everybody is letting you know it's Bernard Punsley who is the only surviving Dead End Kid. (I know you know.) Really enjoyed the John Hart interview.

—Hal Polk, Kearney, NJ
Yep. Putting Billy Halop as the surviving Dead End Kid rather than Punsley (who prefers to remain incommunicado) was a Freudian slip on my part. Halop died in '76.

A terrific SR Ch. 45. A note of thanks for the work you, Hal Polk and others do in correcting past errors. Gene Stutenroth in "Jack Armstrong", for instance. The interview with John Hart was as informative as it was hilarious. Every Sam Katzman buff will treasure Hart's stories of Sam's cheapness.

—Ken Weiss, New Rochelle, NY
"Secret Agent X-9" ('45) has a line of intriguing dialogue which joins my list of favorite movie quotes. "That's Nabura's car, I recognize the headlights." Also noticed none of your writers on "Jungle Jim" mentioned something that intrigued me when I saw the serial. Grant Withers sings "Following The Jungle Trail" twice. It *might* be his voice. If it isn't, who sang for him? This could be one of those bits of serial trivia that is now lost.

—Gary Spencer, Mt. Vernon, NY

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