

SERIAL REPORT

Chapter 48 Jan.-Mar. 2004

In This Chapter:

"King of the Royal Mounted" on DVD/VHS

Philo McCullough

House Peters Jr.; Pierce Lyden

"Mandrake the Magician"

"Green Hornet"; "Queen of the Jungle"; Serial Henchmen



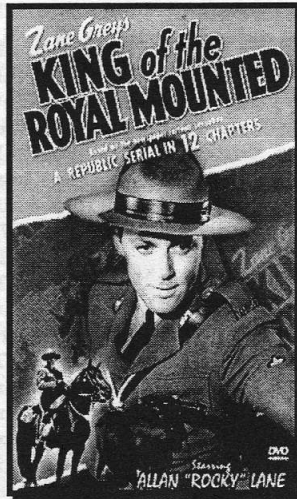
GOLDEN BOOT AWARDS

Primarily designed and awarded for excellence in westerns over the years, Golden Boot Awards will be presented August 7 to three ladies who starred in serials as well as westerns: Lois ("Adventures of Sir Galahad", "Pirates of the High Seas")

Hall, Noel ("Superman", "Adventures of Frank and Jesse James", "James Brothers of Missouri", "Atom Man Vs. Superman") Neill and Phyllis ("Gunfighters of the Northwest", "Jungle Drums of Africa", "Panther Girl of the Kongo") Coates. Gale Storm and Elaine Riley also receive Boots. Call (818) 876-1900 for ticket info. Awards are held at the Merv Griffin Beverly Hilton in L.A. with all proceeds going to the Motion Picture and TV Fund.

DVD SERIALS

"King of the Royal Mounted" is now available on DVD and VHS at \$29.99 from VCI. Many serial devotees have waited years for this classic 12 chapter 1940 Republic Allan Lane cliffhanger to be available at an affordable price. VHS #1795, DVD #8312 (add \$6 postage). <www.vci-entertainment.com> or call (800) 331-4077. Tell 'em SERIAL REPORT sent you. "The Adventures of Captain Marvel" will be released in January on DVD from Republic Entertainment. Price will be about \$15. Meanwhile, VCI also has DVD versions of "Red Ryder", "Dick



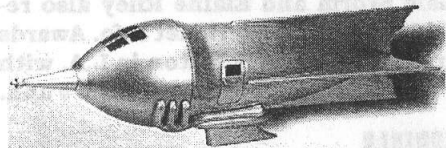
Tracy", "Buck Rogers", "Drums of Fu Manchu", "Jungle Girl", "Mandrake", "Jungle Jim", "The Phantom", "Secret Agent X-9". All \$14.99-\$19.99. Also—"Phantom Empire", "Zorro's Fighting Legion", "Undersea Kingdom", "SOS Coastguard", "Return of Chandu", "Dick Tracy", "Junior G-Men", "Phantom Creeps", "Flash Gordon Conquers the Universe", "Radar Men From the Moon", "Ace Drummond", "Lost Jungle" are available from Alpha Video for as low as \$11.90 each. <www.oldies.com> (800) 336-4627.

SERIAL SNAPSHOTS



A rare posing of the cast and crew of Universal's "Jungle Mystery" ('32). (Back center, L-R) William Desmond, Tom Tyler. (2nd row, L-R) possibly Anders Van Haden, unknown, unknown, producer Henry McRae (w/hat). (Seated, L-R) Noah Beery Jr., director Ray Taylor (in chair), Frank Lack-teen. (Photo courtesy Bernard Mulens of Melbourne, Australia, and SR columnist Jim Stringham.)

Retro 1-2-3 has released a giant-sized limited edition Flash Gordon



rocket set, consisting of two space ships, limited to 275 numbered sets. Not cheap at \$1,500! The Ming the Merciless ship (above) measures 28.5" and Dr. Zarkov's ship is 26.75". Call (815) 338-7693 or visit <www.retrol-2-3.com>



A 1936 stock mint condition one-sheet for Buster Crabbe's "Flash Gordon" sold for \$43,125 at the Profiles in History December 12 auction. Only back in March of 2002 the same poster, or one like it, brought \$26,696 at Christie's, South Kensington, England, vintage poster sale. (SR Ch. 41, pg. 2).

CLASSIFIED ADS

(10¢ a word, Address on cover)

Over 200 Serial Sound Tracks: \$1 per chapter, on 90 minute audio cassettes. Customers must provide their own blank cassettes which will be returned to them with the sound tracks recorded. Please include \$5 for return postage. Cash only. Norman Brennan, Box 202, Amherst, NY 14226-0202.

Vol. III of FEATURE PLAYERS: STORIES BEHIND THE FACES by Tom and Jim Goldrup details the lives, experiences and opinions of 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. \$29.95 postpaid in U.S. Overseas, write for price. Tom and Jim Goldrup, PO Box 425, Ben Lomond, CA 95005. Or send SASE for list of performers. Vol. II still available, \$25 postpaid.



CLIFFHANGER COMMENTARY

by Bruce Dettman

When I took up purchasing old time radio shows several years back I was anxious to add a few episodes of "The Green Hornet" to my growing collection. Since I was not around for its original airing, my knowledge of the show was based largely on material I'd read over the years by entertainment historians such as Jim Harmon and Alan Barbour plus viewing the short-lived ABC TV series starring Van Williams and Bruce Lee which ran in the mid-'60s. The radio series, I must admit, somewhat disappointed me. I loved the concept of the Hornet with his nifty disguise, his sleek, ultra modern car Black Beauty, gas gun, and his loyal assistant Kato, but I found the radio plots too mainstream and mundane, usually pedestrian crime stories lacking the sort of bizarre and exaggerated qualities usually associated with such bigger than life fictional heroes. I also knew of the existence of the two 13 and 15 chapter Universal serials George W. Trendle—who controlled the



character and who had been disappointed by the way Republic had re-tooled his other creation, The Lone Ranger—had allowed to be adapted to the screen only under the stipulation Universal adhere stringently to the Hornet's mythological history. But I'd never caught up to either cliffhanger until recently. The problem with the first serial is getting used to Gordon Jones in the role of hero Britt Reid, alias the Hornet (Warren Hull would take the part in "The Green Hornet Strikes Again" made a year later). To a lot of other film fans, myself included, Jones is mostly recognizable as a slightly paunchy comical sidekick or second banana in the movies, even teaming with Roy Rogers on occasion. That's a tough image to dodge, but with a little effort it can be done, particularly as the young Jones is leaner here and tries to deliver a sincere performance, which he does. As a matter of fact, I



Philip Trent, Gordon Jones, Anne Nagel, Wade Boteler.

grew to like him a lot in the part, particularly his relaxed sense of humor, something rarely evidenced in traditional two-fisted serial leading men. I don't know, once the mask was in place, how much of the action stuff Jones carried out, but I do know Al Hodge, who had a stint playing the character on radio, dubbed his voice. Keye

Luke as Kato is no Bruce Lee in the martial arts department (he manages a few karate chops) but, as always in his long screen career, is likable and always fun to watch.



Filling out the cast are old hands Philip Trent, Ralph Dunn, John Kelly, Wade Boteler and one of my favorite villains Cy Kendall, with Anne Nagel, more versatile in the acting department than most serial queens, effective as Lenore Case. Also be on the lookout for a young Alan Ladd to show up early in the proceedings as an aviator. "The Green Hornet" differs from most serials in that, at least until the wrap-up conclusion, our hero goes after an assortment of different bad guys with (seemingly) non-connected nefarious schemes on their evil minds, from graft at a tunnel construction site to an auto-stealing ring. This allows the four man writing team of George Plympton, Basil Dickey, Morrison C. Wood and Lyonel Margolies a bit more leeway in developing situations and conflicts, although most of the actual cliffhanging situations are not particularly unique or innovative. Old directorial hands Ford Beebe and Ray Taylor set a good pace and the whole thing has the feel of a solid B crime thriller of the era with lots of stock footage of car crashes and racing fire engines plus an uncredited musical score which borrows heavily from

studio vaults, particularly Frank Skinner's memorable "Son of Frankenstein" motifs (village sets leftover from the Frankenstein series can often be glimpsed). "The Green Hornet"—it must also be admitted—has a modest, occasionally cheap look and feel (Universal certainly could have used Republic's Lydecker Brothers given all the airplane crashes depicted) and is definitely not as imaginative or innovative as it could have been had Republic owned the rights to the character, but it's largely entertaining. Jones and Luke work well together, there's plenty of action and enough old-fashioned excitement to go around. It's not a great serial, but it's a pretty good one.



ASK THE SERIAL CELEBS

Q: House Peters Jr., what was it like to work with Jean Rogers in "Adventures of Frank Merriwell" and "Flash Gordon"?

—J. Paul Aierstock Jr., Severn, MD



House Peters Jr.: "She was the rage of Universal, the serial queen, that's for sure. I met her first on 'Frank Merriwell'. I can't remember who Jean was dating, a radio broadcaster, but her mother came to me...I got to know her mother real well. We had lunch on the set, that sort of thing. At that time I was living at my first wife's little home in Ocean Park. Jean's mother just begged me to date Jean, get her away from this guy she was running around with. I got to know Jean pretty darn well, I never dated her or anything...I didn't dare, I was running with my first wife (to be) at

the time. Jean's mother was of Swedish descent, I believe. But Jean's mother just begged me, but I said it was utterly impossible under the circumstances. Jean also went with John King for a bit while we were both doing 'Ace Drummond'. Incidentally, while doing 'Flash Gordon', I'd bought (producer) Henry McRae's '34 Ford for \$400 after he'd traded it in. I parked it on the lot, a wind came along and blew a flat down on the car. Then it snowed that particular day. McRae raised cane. Although I owned the Ford, he thought I shouldn't have parked 'his' car where a flat could fall on it. (Laughs) But that's off the subject. Once I left Universal, I lost touch with Jean and her mother. Jean was a beautiful gal. By the way, we were 12 weeks on 'Merriwell', each week was a different location. We were on John Barrymore's yacht for a week, we were in Santa Barbara for a week...then we used Mulholland Drive and the Universal backlot."

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

Ralph Hodges	Marion Shilling
John Hart	Robert Clarke
Louise Currie	Tommy Farrell
House Peters Jr.	Carole Mathews
Adrian Booth	Pamela Blake
Lois Hall	Dick Jones
Sammy McKim	Myron Healey
Helen Talbot	Sam Edwards
Mary Ellen Kay	Jane Adams
Jane Randolph	Danny Morton
Peggy Stewart	Ann Rutherford
Frankie Thomas	Steve Mitchell
Vivian Austin Coe	Ray Boyle
Robert Scott	

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



WORTH ANOTHER LOOK

by Ken Weiss

In almost every serial there are men who exhibit outstanding loyalty, dedication, determination, skill and courage far beyond the line of duty. I'm referring, of course, to the master villain's main henchmen. These are the men the arch fiend depends on to do his dirty work—jobs that involve extreme risk to life and limb, bravery that would beggar the imagination of most of us, and talents that put mere mortals to shame. Among other qualities, the main henchmen had to be fast thinkers, good brawlers, handy with guns, expert at driving cars at high speeds as well as piloting planes and boats, and willing to follow the most impossible and possibly suicidal orders with nary a word of complaint. Take, for example, the henchmen of Dr. Satan, in "Mysterious Dr. Satan" ('40

A DIABOLICAL GENIUS...PLOTING WORLD DESTRUCTION WITH AN ARMY OF SUPER ROBOTS!



Republic). He's after a new remote-controlled airplane being tested by the government. In Ch. 2 he tells two henchmen to get a plane of their own, follow the test plane, board it in mid air, and steal the remote control device. In case that doesn't work, he orders two other goons to follow the plane by car, be wherever it lands, then steal the unit. The four men accept these assignments as if they were being sent out to pick up groceries. Dutifully, the first two men follow the test plane, managing to fly directly above it. Thousands of feet in the air one of the men

descends a rope ladder, gets onto the plane, kicks-in a window, crawls into the plane and cuts a key hose, sending the plane into a dive. He's discovered by the Copperhead (the serial's hero), beaten in a fight and tossed out of the plane to his doom. The Copperhead manages to gain control of the plane and makes an emergency landing in a field. Guess who's there waiting for him: Dr. Satan's two other men. Now that's competence. (If you think following a plane by car is easy, try it sometime.) Then there's "Killer" Mace (Anthony Warde), the right-hand man of master spy S a k i m a (J o h n n y Arthur) in "The Masked Marvel" ('43 Republic), who, during an escape in the course of his duties, stands on the running board of a speeding truck and fires shots at the pursuing hero. Later, he'll be obliged to move a highly explosive compound (nitroline) from one place to a small boat. Interrupted by the law, he executes a dive into the water and disappears under a dock. He also regularly engages in fist fights and shootouts with the hero and displays a remarkable talent for leaving the scene to narrowly avoid capture or just before an explosion. As part of an effort to steal industrial diamonds being shipped in a bullet-proof car, he kidnaps Lois (Ella Neal), the heroine, and singlehandedly, despite the Masked Marvel's interference, succeeds in getting away with the diamonds. At one point he's driving a truck when the Marvel pushes a pistol through the small opening between the truck's van and cab, aims it at Mace's head and tells him to keep



going. Mace grabs the Marvel's hand, disarms him, and still steering, steps on the gas to pick up speed, then leaps from the truck which careens wildly, flies off the mountain road and explodes. Mace gets away unhurt. Another classic henchman is Bart Matson (George J. Lewis), the Scarab's main man in "Captain America" ('44 Republic). In addition to his many talents he's tough enough to knock Captain America cold in a man-to-man fight and skilled enough to operate a just-developed futuristic weapon (the Firebolt). Like all main henchmen, Matson is uncannily proficient at repeatedly escaping from tight spots just before disaster strikes, can pilot a plane, and is stealthy enough to plant a listening device in the DA's (Dick Purcell) apartment. Matson even dies and comes back to life, thanks to a life-restoring invention stolen by the Scarab. He's also sharper than his boss, figuring out DA Gardner is Captain America long before the Scarab comes to the same conclusion. Unfortunately, his fate is undistinguished: he walks into a trap, is handcuffed and led ignominiously away. My favorite henchmen are the team of Graber and Daly (Clayton Moore and Bob Stevenson) (top pg. 7) in "Radar Men From the Moon" ('52 Republic), primarily because they can rarely get anything right. Like all henchmen they're loyal, fearless and obedient. All they lack is competence and brains. One of their first assignments is to blast a train with a ray gun they've set up in the back of a truck. Before they can strike they're spotted by the hero,



Commando Cody (George Wallace). After a brief gun battle they abandon the truck and flee on foot, leaving the weapon to Cody. Their boss, Moon-man Krog (Peter Brocco) orders them to go to Cody's laboratory to retrieve the ray gun's "atomic chamber", one of the few missions they actually complete. When Krog learns Cody is heading back to earth from the moon in a rocketship, Graber and Daly are sent to destroy it "before anyone can get out of it." As soon as Cody steps out of the ship the two would-be assassins open fire, and miss. When Cody returns fire, Daly gets nicked in the hand, Graber runs out of ammunition and they flee. In desperation, and critically short of Earth money, Krog orders Graber to resume his former career as a bank robber, which Graber does in earnest but with his usual skill. The robbery is botched, three of his underlings are killed and he has to leap from a speeding car to escape capture. Graber and Daly's next assignment is to capture Cody so he can be held for ransom. "Cody should be worth at least a hundred thousand dollars," Krog says. They don't get Cody, but Graber captures his secretary, Joan (Aline Towne), gets her into a plane and pilots it with Cody (who, thanks to a remarkable suit he's invented, can fly) in hot

pursuit. There's a pistol battle between Graber in the plane and Cody in the sky. When he runs out of ammunition (again) Graber bails out—another failed mission, leaving Cody to rescue Joan. Krog gives Graber and Daly (who might have fared better as a vaudeville team) one last chance to redeem themselves: a simple job, to steal a hotel's payroll. But even this is too much for the dynamic duo who are wounded and caught. Eventually, Graber and Daly battle Cody and his buddy Ted (William Bakewell) in a cafe and, as usual, are forced to flee. During the ensuing high-speed auto chase, the duo's car speeds off a mountain road and explodes spectacularly in a fitting end to one of serialdom's more memorable henchmen teams. You have to wonder what henchmen expected to get out of all this. The thought often occurred to me when I was a kid watching these serials. There's rarely mention of the specific salary or reward they can expect. At one point in "Radar Men", Krog admonishes a balky Graber by telling him he's being "well paid." But what kind of salary would encourage anyone to lower himself onto the roof of a hostile airplane? Yes, real-life pilots and stuntpeople often performed this kind of act at fairs or for movies, but the planes were not occupied by passengers who would shoot them on sight. This is the kind of question that demands a "suspension of disbelief," an absolute requirement for anyone who loves serials. Regardless of their motivations, one thing's for sure about henchmen: the master villain would have been helpless without them.



COLUMBIA CLIFFHANGER CASTS

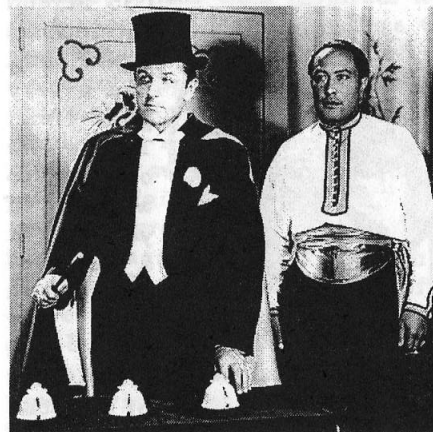
MANDRAKE, THE MAGICIAN

Actor	Character
Warren Hull	Mandrake
Doris Weston	Betty Houston
Al Kikume	Lothar
Rex Downing	Tommy Houston
Edward Earle	Dr. Andre Bennett
Forbes Murray	Professor Houston
Kenneth Macdonald	James Webster
Don Beddoe	Frank Raymond
Dick Curtis	Dorgan (Ch. 6,8)
John Tyrrell	Dirk
Stanley Brown	Green (Ch. 4)
Beatrice Curtis	Nurse (Ch. 3,10)
Sam Ash	George Regan
Lester Dorr	Gray (Ch. 8, 9)
Ernie Adams	Brown (Ch. 2, 3)
Eddie Fetherston	Henchman (Ch. 10)
Edward Foster	Kent (Ch. 1)
George Chesebro	Baker (Ch. 7, 8)
George Turner	Henchman Hall (Ch. 4)
Dirk Thane	Henchman (Ch. 4)
Harry Tenbrook	Streeter (Ch. 5, 6)
Charles Sherlock	Assassin (Ch. 1)
Ralph Peters	Assassin (Ch. 1)
??	Purser (Ch. 1)
??	Airport Henchman (Ch. 1)
??	Airport Henchman (Ch. 1)
Ed Mortimer	Doctor at meeting (Ch. 1)
James Millican	Henchman (Ch. 1)
Lynton Brent	Henchman (Ch. 1)
Reginald Simpson	Parsons the Butler
??	Cabbie (Ch. 2)
??	Cabbie (Ch. 2)
Jerry Frank	Henchman (Ch. 2)
??	Henchman (Ch. 2)
??	Henchman (Ch. 2)
Frank Wayne	Ward (Ch. 1, 3)
Charles Sullivan	Henchman (Ch. 3)
??	Henchman (Ch. 3)
??	Radio man (Ch. 3)
??	Clerk (Ch. 4)
Dick Scott	Henchman (Ch. 4)
Cy Ring	Henchman (Ch. 4)
Steve Clark	Henchman (Ch. 4,5)
??	Lorimer (Ch. 4)

Tom London	Henchman (Ch. 4,5)
??	Henchman (Ch. 5)
Charles Hamilton	Blair (Ch. 5)
Cy Shindell	Henchman (Ch. 5)
Al Herman	H-J (Ch. 5)
Oscar G. Hendrian	Henchman (Ch. 5)
Kit Guard	Henchman (Ch. 5)
Tom Steele	Henchman (Ch. 5)
Allen Matthews	Henchman (Ch. 5)
Johnnie Berkes	Henchman (Ch. 5)
??	Henchman guard (Ch. 6)
Earl Askam	Henchman (Ch. 6,7)
Art Mix	Henchman (Ch. 6,7)
Stanley Mack	Henchman (Ch. 6,7)
Stanley Blystone	CX-12 (Ch. 7)
??	Eddie (Ch. 7)
??	Mack (Ch. 7)
Jack Kenny	Williams (Ch. 7)
??	Henchman (Ch. 7)
Charles McMurphy	Telephone Foreman (Ch. 7)
Jim Toney	Watchman (Ch. 7)
Bud Wolfe	Cable Car Heavy (Ch. 7)
Paul Whitney	Martin (Ch. 7, 8)
??	Telephone Thug (Ch. 8)
??	Telephone Thug (Ch. 8)
Blackie Whiteford	Car Henchman (Ch. 8)
Frank Hagney	Harris (Ch. 8)
Sailor Vincent	Henchman (Ch. 8)
??	3 diff. Henchies (Ch. 9)
??	Rest Home 1 st Patient-Henchie (Ch. 10)
??	Rest Home 2 nd Patient-Henchie (Ch. 10)
Richard Fiske	Henchman (Ch. 10)
George Magril	Henchman (Ch. 11)
??	Caddie (Ch. 11)
Harry Humphrey	Party Guest (Ch. 12)
George DeNormand	Double for Warren Hull

For whatever reason, this is Columbia's only 12 chapter serial. Although it's obvious from the get-go exactly *who* the masked villain, The Wasp, really is, the serial is filled

with plenty of zip and action, not undue greatly to Morris Stoloff's terrific, exciting score. It's odd Columbia didn't portray Mandrake with a mustache like he has in the comic strip, their thinking at the time was probably heroes don't wear mustaches, bad guys do. The biggest disappointment in the serial is the real lack of "Mandrake gestures hypnotically" material used so effectively in the comic strip. There's none of that



here, with Columbia reducing Mandrake to a routine card-trick/rabbit-pulling stage magician, albeit a two-fisted one. This serial has the Wasp employing a coterie of more henchmen than I've ever witnessed in one serial. They literally come and go in every chapter! Please note, Robert Sterling (later of TV's "Topper" and married to Anne Jeffreys) gets billing every chapter, but is *not* in the serial. He was either replaced or edited out. (Cast credits thanks to Hal Polk.)

Cheat Endings!

In "Superman", at the close of Ch. 11, two thugs shoot into a large crate on a truck supposedly containing a hidden Jimmy Olsen. (Superman has replaced him.) At the start of Ch. 12, a complete different sequence of events occurs. The dialog that took place between the two thugs is gone and only one thug shoots at the box. (Thanx to Jerry Zavadil.)



SERIAL HEAVIES

Disreputable, smug and smarmy, often with a crouched creepiness to his physique as his evil mind plotted how to grab the



gal's ranch, steal the map, or make off with the treasure, Philo McCullough first came to serials at Pathe in 1915 with a small role in "Red Circle" opposite Ruth Roland. "Neal of the Navy" ('15) with Lillian Lorraine and the offbeat "Neglected Wife" ('16), again with Ruth Roland, followed, both lesser roles. He moved up a bit in the cast for "Grip of Evil" ('16) with Jackie Saunders. Away from cliffhangers for a few years, McCullough returned in 1922 for Warner Bros.' 15 chapter "A Dangerous Adventure" as the lead heavy opposite Grace Darmond. A nasty, villainous role in "Bar-C Mystery", a 10 chapter Pathe cliffhanger in '27, further cemented his standing. The '30s found him playing heavies primarily in the B's and serials ground out on Poverty Row. His 11 sound serials consist of good roles in Mascot's "Phantom of the West" ('31) and "Vanishing Legion" ('31) followed by two more heavies at Universal—"Jungle Mystery" ('32) and "Heroes of the West" ('32). Sol Lesser used him in "Tarzan the Fearless", a '33 Principal release. Then McCullough found himself trapped in the Central American jungle mire of "Young Eagles" ('34 First Division). A meager role in Ken Maynard's "Mystery Mountain" ('34 Mascot) followed. Now 41, Philo's "star" was beginning to fade, and roles in his last four serials, all at

Universal, were definitely lesser in nature: "Pirate Treasure" ('34), "Adventures of Frank Merriwell" ('36), "Tim Tyler's Luck" ('37) and "Green Hornet Strikes Again" ('41). Although his 57 year career on screen lasted until 1969, by the '40s he was reduced to playing uncredited character parts, although the parts were primarily in A films ("Tennessee Johnson" '43; "Life With Father" '47; "Fountainhead" '49; "Stars In My Crown" '50; "Bedtime For Bonzo" '51; "Destry" '54; "Cheyenne Autumn" '64 and his last, "Great Bank Robbery" '69). Part of this time he was under contract to Warner Bros. McCullough was born in San Bernardino, California, June 16, 1893. The son of Mary S. McCullough, a non-professional, (his father unknown), he was educated at Los Angeles High School then started his career at a very young age during stage training with the Burbank Stock Company. He entered films in 1912 at 19 with his first credit in 1914, "While Wifey Is Away". McCullough's wife of many years was Laura Anson (1892-1968), a silent actress in several Fatty Arbuckle comedies. Apparently, McCullough remarried as his tradepaper obituaries state he was survived by a wife when he died at his Burbank, CA, home June 5, 1981, just short of his 88th birthday. With 6 silents and 11 talkie serials to his credit, Philo McCullough is not to be forgotten by cliffhanger watchers.

D'ja know:

Republic's "Spy Smasher" ('42) originated from Fawcett's WHIZ COMICS #1 ('40). In reality, Spy Smasher was playboy Alan Armstrong. Republic gave him a twin brother, Jack, in the serial.. making him Jack Armstrong. It's odd Republic lawyers overlooked the radio hero by that name (which began in '33) and weren't sued.



THE OLD ONES AND THE NEW ONES

by Jim Stringham

Okay, not all the serials are great. Even the weakest, though, usually have some enjoyable moments. So let's discuss guilty pleasures. Just for fun, I ran "Queen of the Jungle"



IT BEGINS WHERE
"TRADER HORN" LEFT OFF!

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presents

QUEEN OF THE JUNGLE

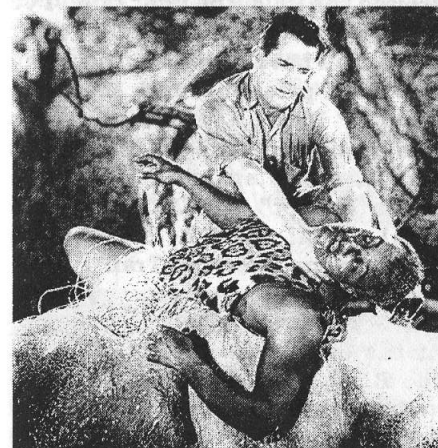
with
REED HOWES
MARY KORNMAN

Directed by ROBERT HILL

12 Amazing Chapters of
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('35 Screen Attractions) again, and had a very good time. That's the only way to watch it. If you take it a bit seriously, you just sit there and groan. Most of the action is obviously lifted from the silent "Jungle Goddess" ('22) ("The Lost City" in '35 used scenes from that source, too), but it is spectacular. They spent money on serials in those days. The "Queen of the Jungle" producers also spent money to match the silent footage. There are elaborate new sets, many costumed players, and some added fights. Sometimes, the match-up wasn't easy. Elinor Field appeared in different costumes throughout "Jungle Goddess". In an inspired bit of improvisation, the "Queen" writer (J. Griffin Jay) had Joan (Mary Kornman) and David (Reed Howes) row ashore from a ship overrun by wild animals. David had salvaged a

duffel bag. It didn't contain weapons or provisions, but something far more important: a change of clothes to agree with stock footage in Joan's next scenes. Reed Howes fits the stock shots of Truman Van Dyke and lovely Mary Kornman looks a lot like Elinor Field. Lafe McKee has it easy; he appears in the same role in both serials. However, dialogue (sometimes added to the silent footage) is less than inspired. We first see Reed Howes enroute to Mary's home with George Chesebro. We're not supposed to notice they're watching animals on the open plains from deep in the jungle. Howes wipes away sweat, swats a mosquito, and proclaims, "Gee, Ken, it's certainly great to be back in the jungle, again." After he and Chesebro are quickly killed off, Howes is resurrected in another role, but Chesebro never reappears. During lulls in the action, Howes keeps trying to teach Mary English, with lines much like the "Me...Tarzan...You...Jane" of those other movies. He usually gives up, saying, "Oh, skip it." The main story



line has Howes, as David Worth, trying to return Joan Lawrence (Mary Kornman), now worshipped as the White Priestess Queen of the Jungle, to her parents. The high

priest of Mu seeks radium for some reason, and there is even mention of the burial ground of the elephants. Joan's father, driven mad by the loss of his wife and daughter (that's Mary Kornman twice!) is now galloping about as a masked rider on (what else?) a masked horse. Aided by friendly Arabs (also seeking the radium) and a Leopard Woman, they escape the jungle. The sight of his daughter restores John Lawrence to his senses. Safe at last, Joan speaks her first sentence in English: "Oh, skip it." Don't try to make sense of it, but, hey, I had a good time through all 12 chapters. That will have to do, unless "Jungle Goddess" surfaces.

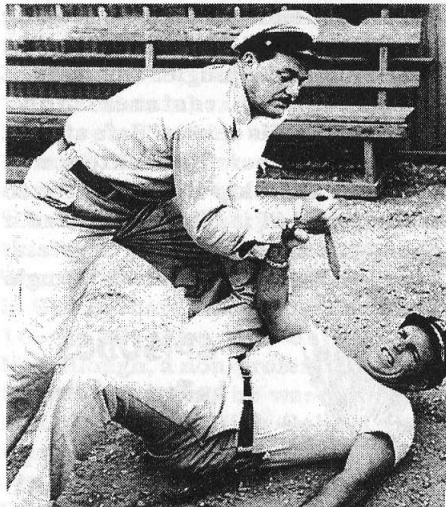


EPISODES

by Tom and Jim
Goldrup

Pierce Lyden wrote in his book, THOSE SATURDAY SERIALS, "Serials were a very satisfying period during the fourteen and a half years with (Sam) Katzman productions, a subsidiary of Columbia. Not only from a financial point of view. They were all different, not all the same type western, not all sea or Tarzan type. Some were far out science fiction, Buck Rogers, Superman, etc. The end of each episode was different and it was always fun to see how they developed and how they were going to leave the star hanging at the end of this one. They were fun because there was never a dull moment during the six or seven weeks. Always plenty of action and many times there were dangerous and close calls. Like once on 'The Sea Hound' with Buster Crabbe they threw five or six of us baddies overboard from the ship we were trying to capture. We were supposed to swim toward shore, the camera would cut and a motorboat would

come out and pick us up—only the guy couldn't get it started and we had to swim for shore. The ocean was cold as ice! I'm not a long distance swimmer and never could have made it except for the help of Rusty Wescoatt and another stuntman, Solly. Playing a pirate



Pierce Lyden battles Buster Crabbe in Ch. 2 of "Pirates of the High Seas" ('50).

one other time and stripped to the waist, a guy in back of me tripped and fell shooting off his gun with 12 gauge shot wadding going into my back. That hurts and can be poisonous, you know! That's what made them interesting or different, and worthwhile. Hard work, long hours and action! 'Roar of the Iron Horse' was the second serial with Jocko Mahoney. It was made mainly in Carson City, NV, in early '51. It was a hard working, rough job almost every day, at least for me. Myron Healey fell off his horse and went to the hospital. So the next day, when it was unknown when he would be back, they blended his part with—who else? Mine. I was changing makeup, wardrobe, horses, playing an Indian, a cowboy, and memorizing dialogue in between times, until I didn't have time to

sleep. There were days when I was up all day long, riding western saddle, bareback or with a blanket over one of the hard wooden army saddles. I had blisters you wouldn't believe, and, to add insult to injury, in a chase the horse ahead of me picked up a stone that cut through my trousers, tearing my knee open and filled my boot with blood! So it was a serial to remember, but it was great fun! A great location! And never a dull moment (as usual) around Jocko. There was an excellent serial cast again and again to work with. William Fawcett, Rusty Wescoatt, Frank Ellis, Dick Curtis, Hugh Prosser, Bud Osborne, Rick Vallin, and my good friend Jack Ingram, who had a great time every night (as did many others) at the crap tables, even if they did leave most of their salary there. It was all capped off by leaving in a chartered, rejected plane from World War II in a snow storm! The plane had been gutted so we sat on the floor. The roughest plane ride I've ever had. We were coming in and were fogged in at Burbank. After several circles around the field, the pilot said, 'I've found a hole, I think,' and he went down. You have never seen so many cowboys pile out and kiss the ground." Pierce Lyden's numerous film credits included a total of 22 serials, which spanned from "The Green Hornet" in '40 through the final serial in '56, Columbia's "Blazing the Overland Trail".

Cheat Endings!

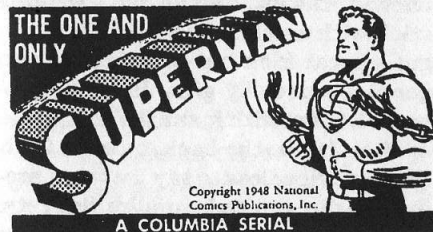
At the end of Ch. 4 of "G-Men Vs. the Black Dragon", Rod Cameron and an agent of the Black Dragon Society fall out a window together! In Ch. 5, Rod grabs a fire hose before he falls. That does not happen in Ch. 4. Also, the two men fall separately!



A SERIAL REPORT FROM FAR OFF NEW ZEALAND

by Barrie Hanfling

I grew up at the Saturday matinee with the last of the screen serials, those rather slipshod efforts from Columbia and Republic in the late '40s and '50s which must have colored my attitude toward the chapterplay. I enjoyed them, but soon, in my own estimation, grew out of them while still reveling in the western features of Rogers, Elliott, Holt and Autry. But it is never too late and when came the time to catch up on the past I had not experienced, I eagerly did so, and joined the video collectors of the '80s and '90s in amassing a goodly supply of serials from the '30s and '40s. Funnily enough, even though I enjoyed these earlier chapterplays and recognized them for the superior product they were (compared with those of my youth), I still retained a sneaking liking for the "days of my youth" and the likes of "Cody of the Pony Express", "Mysterious Island", "Superman",



"Batman and Robin" and the like—even Commando Cody and other rather ridiculous sci-fi serial figures from the lazy '50s. They say you never escape the initial thrill of youth's pleasures, and it is understandable. However, being like most of my age group, those brought up in the late World War II and after

period, I was privileged to take part in the great revival of B-features and serials which took place in the late '60s through to the present day, when it is a big booming business, not just for us old timers but also for even younger viewers. Thus it was great to view at last those memorable productions from the past, from early sound Mascot raw material, to Universal's great days in the '30s (especially in westerns), Republic's emergence as the slickest (for a while) of them all and Columbia's dogged efforts that never reached great heights but still hold a curious appeal. Westerns were my greatest love, so it was the really good work of Buck Jones and Johnny Mack Brown in the '30s which held my attention for a long time. The Universal chapterplays, "Gordon of Ghost City", "Rustlers of Red Dog", "Phantom Rider", "Wild West Days"—through to Brown's final "Oregon Trail" in '39, were big and bruising productions, built



around large stock scenes from silent days, but none the worse for that. Part of the fun is recognizing the early material. However, especially in the first few, there were plenty of new and even dramatic scenes (soon to be almost unknown in serials). Even though looking a bit weary, the studio managed to ride on with "Riders of Death Valley", "Winners of the West", "Raiders of Ghost City" and a few others, still capturing the essence of excitement until they closed their secondary units down in 1946 and left the serial field forever. By then their two

rivals were Columbia (who had built a good serial tradition in the late '30s through Bill Elliott) and Republic, who had emerged as the swiftest and slickest serial producers in both westerns and just plain action fests. I always felt Republic suffered from their decision (or decisions by both them and their contract stars) not to star their leading feature cowboys in their serials. It's notable that the last of the great Republic western serials were "Adventures of Red Ryder" starring Don Barry and the three they made with Allan Lane—neither of whom were stars at that point, of course. Perhaps Republic hoped other leading men in their subsequent serials would become popular feature players, but it never happened, even with the great Clayton Moore, the man who gained fame only behind a mask. Columbia had at least the genial Jock Mahoney as a star in the '50s, who gave some western class to what were messy, but still better than Republic product of the time. Apart from independent efforts, the other primary serial producer (until they ceased production on their own to form part of the new Republic) was Mascot. As with their non-western efforts, Mascot western serials were imaginative, haphazard and blatantly impossible—but wildly fun—especially when Ken Maynard or Tom Mix rode the western range. Alas, newcomer Gene Autry looked spectacularly helpless in the brilliant "Phantom Empire". John Wayne served part of



his awkward apprenticeship at Mascot, but his serials were not westerns,

not that with Mascot it was always possible to tell—plots covered un-imaginable barriers! In the long run, the old serials gave immense pleasure. Mascots were fun, Universals were great, Columbia endured with time and Republic looked like the master of all—at least through the days of "Vigilantes Are Coming", "Painted Stallion", "Undersea Kingdom", "Daredevils of the Red Circle", "The Lone Ranger" and "Captain Marvel"—before rigor mortis began to strike the Republic serial structure, brought about by management budgeting over the next decade trying to keep the little studio in the valley going. What days they were—what glorious days! Viewers have no excuse for not reliving them, or visiting them for the first time today. Read the various excellent books written about serials—then see the product. Nostalgia or discovery, both are delightful. *(The preceding column was written prior to Barrie's untimely death.)*

CHAPTERPLAYER QUOTES

House Peters Jr.: "Sam Katzman was a character. He was always on the set, smoking a cigar. He was a great one for visiting and sitting around the set chewing the fat. And he had a walking stick with an electric battery in it. He got a great kick out of using that on people, especially girls. He would approach them with it and jab their knee or their leg in the back, or even their rear end. Needless to say, he was a producer who worked on slim budgets. One time, when my agent was in Katzman's office trying to negotiate for me to get \$75 a day for a role instead of the \$55 Sam was offering, I was standing outside the office door and overheard everything. Katzman would not budge, insisting he didn't have any more (money). Then he picked up the phone and dialed his bookie to put \$1,000 on a horse!"



SERIAL CLIPPINGS

"Tarzan the Tiger" ('29) w/Frank Merrill called "quite engaging" in BIG REEL (11/03), noting director Ford Beebe wrote the dialogue cards for the part sound/mostly silent serial. BIG REEL writer Hank Davis points out the unusual amount of snappy Tracy/Hepburn type dialogue in "Daughter of Don Q" ('46) for the 12/03 issue. Davis punches lots of holes in Columbia's "Blackhawk" ('52) in BIG REEL (1/04).

Photo of Buster Crabbe as Tarzan (along with other non-serial ape men) in GLOBE (10/7) in connection with the new—and awful (already cancelled) TV Tarzan.

Serial "recollection" column ("Flash Gordon" one-sheet repro) in GOOD OLD DAYS (11/03). Ralph ("Sea Hound", "Mysterious Island") Hodges shown with another guest, Gloria Marlen, at the Memphis Film Festival ('03) in Covington, Louisiana, NEWS BANNER (10/26).

Football legend and star of "King of the Texas Rangers", Sammy Baugh, 89, interviewed in DALLAS MORNING NEWS (11/23). (Thanx to Barry Martin.) Associated Press 11/4 syndicated article points out some similarities to old serials and new multi-part films like "Lord of the Rings", "Matrix", "Kill Bill", "Star Wars". (Thanx to Pat Shields.) SPORTS ILLUSTRATED featuring the all-time best for each state during the mag's issue by issue 50th anniversary. The 10/27 issue selected Buster Crabbe from Hawaii. Altho born in California, he was reared in Honolulu. (Thanx to Fred Davis.)

MEETING SERIAL STARS

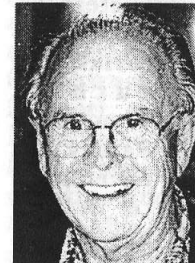
Each year Michael Fitzgerald (a SERIAL REPORT contributor) and friend Gary Bell sponsor a Hollywood

Reunion Party at Sportsmen's Lodge in North Hollywood. This past October 19's gathering included FRANKIE ("Tim Tyler's Luck") THOMAS, VIVIAN ("Red Ryder") COE, JEANNE ("Phantom") BATES, TOMMY ("Pirates of the High Seas", etc.) FARRELL, DICK ("Blake of Scotland Yard", etc.) JONES,



House Peters Jr.

CAROLE ("Monster and the Ape") MATHEWS, SAMMY ("Painted Stallion", "Flying G-Men", etc.) MCKIM, HOUSE ("Batman and Robin", "King of the Rocketmen", etc.) PETERS JR.,



Sammy McKim.



Vivian Coe.

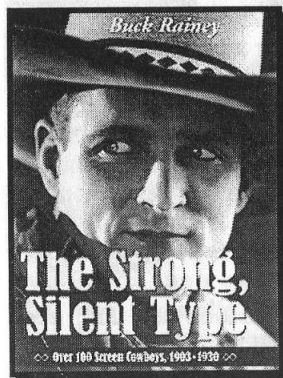
DANNY ("Mysterious Mr. M", etc.) MORTON, ANN ("Fighting Marines") RUTHERFORD, MARJORIE ("Adventures of Sir Galahad") STAPP and RUSSELL ("Ace Drummond") WADE. Certainly many other non-serial related celebs were also in attendance. (See WC #57.) DICK JONES attends the one day London, England, Film Fest March 7 at the Theatre, International Student's House, 221 Great Portland St. Contact Colin Momber (44) 117968-4776. The 7th annual Roy Rogers/Dale Evans Film Festival March 6-7 in Victorville, CA, brings in some 20 celebrities including LOIS HALL, JOHN HART, HOUSE PETERS JR., STEVE MITCHELL, RAY BOYLE (aka Dirk London) who all appeared in se-

rials. SR's Boyd Magers will moderate three celebrity panels, one dealing extensively with serials. (760) 240-3330. **DICK JONES** and **RAY BOYLE** join others for a two day celebration of western films at the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library in West Branch, IA, June 4-5. SR's Boyd Magers will moderate two exciting panel discussions. Contact Matt Schaefer (319) 643-5301. **NOEL NEILL** attends the Memphis Film Festival June 17-19. <www.memphisfilmfestival.com>



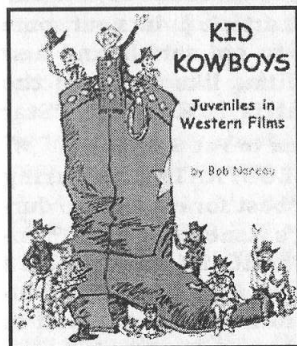
ON THE SERIAL BOOKSHELF

(Review by Bill Russell.) In his long, distinguished career as a western/serial film historian and author, **Buck Rainey** has never failed to deliver the goods. With his latest endeavor he has delivered up the



best. **THE STRONG, SILENT TYPE** is certainly a silent western and serial fan's delight. This 714-page encyclopedia of over 100 screen cowboys (most of whom appeared in serials as well) covering the period 1903 to 1930 is simply a great piece of work. The enormous contents of this huge, 8-1/2 x 11" soft-cover book, featuring a beautiful shot of Fred Thomson on the cover, is staggering. One has to dig deep to find anything wrong with Rainey's latest work. Actually, the only obvious omission (to silent fans, anyway), and it is an apparent oversight by the author, is the exclusion of Will-

iam Desmond. The big guys get the most attention, and rightfully so. Buck devotes 16 pages to Tom Mix, 14 to Hoot Gibson, and 11 to Buck Jones. Rainey cites numerous and fascinating tidbits about certain stars. For example, did you know Rex Lease died an alcoholic or that Buzz Barton was aboard the battleship Missouri for the U.S.-Japan peace treaty signing? Speaking just serials—you'll find Tom London, Art Acord, Yakima Canutt, George Chesebro, Ed Cobb, Jim Corey, Bob Custer, William Farnum, Franklyn Farnum, Jack Hoxie, Buck Jones, Al Ferguson, Bob Kortman, Rex Lease, Tim McCoy, Ken Maynard, Bobby Nelson, Bud Osborne, Bob Steele, Tom Tyler, Slim Whitaker and many others. The mix of good guys and others (like "runt" Ernie Adams) might be questioned, but it's called author's prerogative. Over 300 photos, many of them never printed before, easy-to-read filmographies on each star, plus an extensive bibliography and full index, make this work an absolute must for every western/serial film fan, silent or sound. Reasonably priced at \$49 ppd., McFarland, Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640. (800) 253-2187. <www.mcfarlandpub.com>



our silver screen heroes as they restored law and order to the wild west. Some we saw over and over, others we saw but rarely...either way, Bob Nareau rounded them all

K I D KOWBOYS salutes more than 80 juvenile actors who rode the B-western range alongside

up for a stirring ride down well recalled Saturday matinee trails. Many of the kids covered were in serials: Sammy McKim, Buzz Barton, Noah Beery Jr., Bobby Clark, Bill Cody Jr., Frank Coghlan, Tommy Cook, Frankie Darro, Johnny Duncan, Buzz Henry, Newton House, Dick Jones, Bobby Nelson, Mickey Rentschler, Mickey Rooney, Betsy King Ross. Some of their stories are more complete as to biographical info, for others little or no bio material could be found. Although it contains a 24 pg. 51 photo center section, the book is severely wounded by not having a photo of each "Kid Kowboy" right alongside his bio for easy identification. Beautiful original color cover created especially for this book by Sammy McKim ("Painted Stallion", "Flying G-Men", "Great Adventures of Wild Bill Hickok") who became a well known Disney craftsman. \$20 ppd. Empire Pub., PO Box 717, Madison, NC 27025. (336) 427-5850 <www.empirepublishing.com>



CHAPTER 13

Beloved director **Earl Bellamy**, 86, who amassed a diverse list of over 1,600 TV episodes, died November 30 in Rio Rancho, NM (actually part of Albuquerque) where he and his wife Gail have lived since '91. The son of a B&O railroad engineer, born in Minneapolis, MN, the family moved to California in 1920. Earl began as an office boy at Columbia, working his way up to 2nd then 1st assistant director by mid 1940. After a stint making training films for the Navy during WWII, he became assistant director for George Cukor and Fred Zinneman, among others. Earl received a DGA (Director's Guild) award in '53 for his work on "From Here to Eternity".

He worked on such prestige pictures as "Born Yesterday" and "A Star Is Born" right along with Durango Kid and Russell Hayden B-westerns and "The Desert Hawk" serial, all at Columbia. He started directing with George Montgomery's "Seminole Uprising" ('55) and didn't stop til he retired in 1986. Earl received the prestigious Golden Boot Award in 2002.

Robert Scott ("Black Arrow"): "He was thoughtful and productive. He was Mr. Columbia. What a nice guy."



Vivacious, charming **DOROTHY FAY (RITTER)**, 88, died Nov. 5 at the Motion Picture retirement home in Woodland Hills, CA, where

she'd lived since '89 after suffering a stroke in '87. Born Dorothy Fay Southworth, the daughter of a Prescott, AZ, doctor, she grew up in Prescott but spent her last year in high school at Hollywood High. After attending USC, she studied acting at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London and at the Pasadena Playhouse. From '38-'41 she was the leading lady in 10 B-westerns and two serials. She made the first of four westerns with her future husband, Tex Ritter, in '38. They were married in '41. The Ritters moved to Nashville in '68. After Tex died in '74 (at 68), Dorothy became an official greeter at the Grand Ole Opry. She returned to California in '81. Dorothy's in "White Eagle" with Buck Jones and "The Green Archer" with Victor Jory.

RUTH HALL, 92, a busy leading lady in the early '30s, died Oct. 9 in Glendale, CA. Born Ruth Blasco Ybanez in Jacksonville, FL, she came to Hollywood under con-



tract to Paramount. After being named a Wampas Baby Star in '32, she began appearing in westerns and serials until she married fellow Christian Scientist, cinematographer Lee Garmes in '33. As Garmes was an Academy Award winner ("Shanghai Express" in '32) and had an illustrious career ("Gone With The Wind", "Duel In the Sun", etc.), Ruth never returned to films. She's John Wayne's leading lady in "Three Musketeers".

VICTORIA HORNE, 91, married to comic actor Jack Oakie, died Oct. 10 of natural causes in a Beverly Hills retirement home. Born in New York City, she graduated from the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, spent a season at Stratford-on-Avon in England and returned to the U.S. to appear in "Hamlet". Coming to Hollywood, she appeared in over 40 films including two Universal serials, "Scarlet Horseman" and "Secret Agent X-9". Horne quit in '53 to spend time with her husband. When he died in '78 she spent her life burnishing her husband's memory, including four books about their life together.



FRANCES MORRIS, 98, B-western leading lady of the '30s, died December 2 in Santa Clarita, CA. When the leading lady roles dried up, Frances became a character actress in films and on into TV, including Clark Kent's Earth-mother on the first "Superman" TV episode with George Reeves. Frances was first married to silent actor Russell Parker, then actor Antrim Short. She has a small role in Republic's "Dick Tracy vs. Crime Inc."

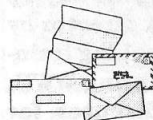


Talented child actor **DAVID HOLT**, 76, who specialized in playing snobby rich kids while under contract to Paramount, died November 15 in Tustin, CA. After leaving the screen in '53, he composed jazz and was a highly successful realtor. Six year old David was the body double for Cheetah in Buster Crabbe's "Tarzan the Fearless". Clad in a chimp costume, he climbed a tree and did whatever the chimp wouldn't do.

Publisher/Editor RON DOWNEY, 62, of World of Yesterday Publishing in Waynesville, NC, died November 8 at a hospital there following several medical setbacks. Ron and his wife Linda began the respected **UNDER WESTERN SKIES** in January '78 followed by **CLIFFHANGER** in '83. They took risks in publishing western film books when no one else would. Over the years they published **THE FILMS OF HOPALONG CASSIDY**, **THE FILMS OF THE CISCO KID**, **THE LIFE AND FILMS OF BUCK JONES** (two volumes, silent and sound), **FILMS OF JOHNNY MACK BROWN**, **THE TOM MIX BOOK** and **THOSE GREAT COWBOY SIDE-KICKS**. **WOY** was always a two-person operation, we all owe a huge debt of gratitude to Ron (and Linda) for all their hard work and efforts which gave us so much enjoyment and information.



SERIAL MAILBAG



Thank you for **SERIAL REPORT**. I enjoy each issue immensely. Your publication is an oasis in the desert. One gentleman loaned me his two books on Flash Gordon. I in turn loaned him my "Flash Gordon"

serial. Fun to check out the consistency between the comics and the serial. I also attribute my love of classical music to the serials.

—Wes Wardell, Wilmington, DE

In answer to Walter Kowalski's letter in SR Ch. 47, the actor who appeared as a truck driver in "Secret Agent X-9" ('37) and the Nazi gangplank sailor in "Secret Agent X-9" ('45) and a bartender in "The Shadow" ('40) is Charles Sullivan.

—Hal Polk, Kearny, NJ

Usually playing tough guys, mugs, boxers, workmen and cops, and usually not given billing, character actor Sullivan was in films from '25-'58. Born 4/24/1899 in Louisiana, died 6/25/72 in L.A. His other serials include "Dick Tracy Returns" ('38), "Dick Tracy's G-Men" ('39), "Mandrake" ('39), "Green Hornet" ('40), "Secret Code" ('42), "King of the Forest Rangers" ('46), "Daughter of Don Q" ('46), "Black Widow" ('47), "G-Men Never Forget" ('47), "Invisible Monster" ('50), "Trader Tom of the China Seas" ('54), "Man With the Steel Whip" ('54) and "Panther Girl of the Kongo" ('55).



Whatever happened to Marten Lamont who starred in Republic's "Federal Operator 99" ('45)?

—John Ryan, Denver, CO
Marten (pronounced Martin) Lamont died April 16, 1991.

I recently purchased Mascot's Ken Maynard serial "Mystery Mountain". Ch. 2 is rife with continuity

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problems. One scene has Ken's pants tucked in his boots...then they're out. He starts out on a trip to town with empty holsters and by the time he arrives, the guns have magically re-appeared. And for about three seconds in the cliffhanger, his hat goes from black to white to black again. Still a lot of fun to watch!

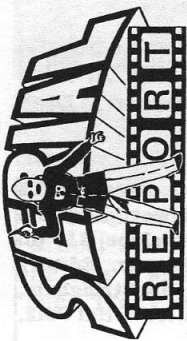
—Pat Shields, Studio City, CA

I enjoyed the article by Ken Weiss on the Stage and Screen serial "The Clutching Hand" (SR Ch. 47) and the brief history of the Weiss family in serial production. What was left out is that after Stage and Screen went out of business, Louis Weiss produced Columbia's first three serials, "Jungle Menace", "Mysterious Pilot" and "Secret of Treasure Island". Having not seen the first two serials, I cannot comment on them, but "Secret of Treasure Island" wasn't all that bad compared to other independent and Universal serials of the period. Like Ken, I also enjoyed the campy "Clutching Hand" and the other two Stage and Screen serials ("Black Coin", "Custer's Last Stand").

—Frank Gutierrez, San Jose, CA
There is evidence Louis Weiss was also involved with Columbia's fourth serial, "Great Adventures of Wild Bill Hickok" ('38) although credit goes to Harry Webb.

D'ja know:

Sammy McKim auditioned for the role of Disney's "Pinocchio", a voice part which eventually went to Dick Jones.



Boyd Magers
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