

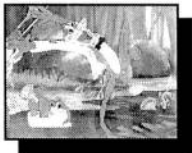


THEM THAR HILLS - Tent # 281

FILM PROGRAM - FEBRUARY 8, 2009

THEM THAR HILLS

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert, Mae Busch, Charlie Hall, Dick Alexander, Bobby Dunn, Sam Lufkin, Eddie Baker. Well, what better way to christen the Tent's big screen with its Laurel and Hardy namesake. Thanks to his propensity to overindulge, Ollie is ordered by Dr. Gilbert to take a trip up into the mountains where, of course, things happen! In addition to the antique charmer "The Old Spinning Wheel", Marvin Hatley's "I Wake Up With A Song" is heard on the soundtrack in this classic short. And Tent members will see right away why Mae Busch and Charlie Hall are part of our regular ceremonial proceedings.



SWING WEDDING

1937 MGM / Harman-Ising One Reel Color

A raucus, colorful (!) jazztune featuring caricatures of Cab Calloway, Fats Waller, Stepin Fetchit and many others. This one's got eh-h-h-h-everything, including an incredible "shoot-em-up" at the finale!

HEARTS ARE THUMPS

1937 Hal Roach-MGM One Reel Directed by Gordon Douglas.

With Spanky McFarland, Carl "Alfalfa" Switzer, Eugene "Porky" Lee, Billy "Buckwheat" Thomas, Darla Hood, Darwood Kaye, Sidney Kilbrick, and Rosina Lawrence. Presented in honor of the forthcoming Valentine's Day, this is one of the last of the Hal Roach "Our Gang" shorts. In just one year, the franchise would be produced as well as released by MGM and all inherent charm would fade away forever. Even in this later entry, the deft handling of the youngsters, superb photography and cutting, and charming music by Leroy Shield make this a timeless smiler for children of all ages.



TWO TARS

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, James Finlayson, Charlie Hall, Thelma Hill, Ruby Blaine, Edgar Dearing, Harry Bernard, Jack Hill, Sam Lufkin, Thomas Benton Roberts. We know one charter member of Tent 281 who is going to be very happy to see TWO TARS. This is one of the final entries in the Laurel and Hardy series of silent two-reelers. The following year Stan and Babe would embark on their trek through talkie land. As for TWO

TARS, it remains an outstanding film comedy, one of the very best of the silent era. Stan and Ollie, gobs on leave, pick up a couple of skirts and head for the highways only to be waylaid by a massive traffic jam. Tempers and temperatures rise at exponential levels until riots ensue and cycle cop Edgar Dearing attempts to take charge. The Roach Studios property department went into overdrive on this one, creating and modifying dozens of tin lizzies for the climactic chaos.

NEXT MEETING: _____

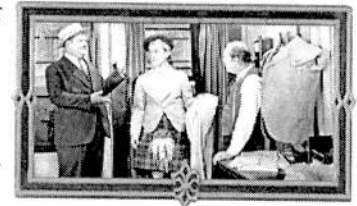


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - MARCH 29, 2009

PUTTING PANTS ON PHILLIP

1927 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Clyde Bruckman. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charles Bachman, Harvey Clark, Sam Lufkin, Jack Hill. Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy had appeared together in a dozen pictures at Hal Roach by the time PUTTING PANTS ON PHILLIP was released as the first official "Laurel and Hardy Comedy". Even so, the boys do not play a team per se and do not appear in their familiar bowler hats. It is very much a character comedy with Stan a randy Scotsman who jumps for joy at the sight of every -and any- girl in Culver City! Ollie tries to preserve his dignity despite the arrival of his flamboyant nephew.



BIMBO'S INITIATION

1931 Max Fleischer - Paramount One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. Voices: Billy Murray, Mae Questel. An early Fleischer "Talkartoon" featuring jivin' Bimbo. Dog-eared Betty Boop makes one of her first appearances in this bizarre bit of animated psychodelia.

PUPS IS PUPS

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Robert McGowan. With Wheezer Hutchins, Jackie Cooper, Farina Hoskins, Chubby Chaney, Dorothy Deborba, Mary Ann Jackson, Charlie Hall, Lyle Tayo, Allan Cavan, Jack Hill. One of the best of the early OUR GANG talkies, PUPS IS PUPS features a simple premise - Wheezer loses his dogs, who answer happily to the sound of his bell. Or any bell! While Wheezer rings around for his pups, the rest of the gang is preparing their pets for the big pet fair. Will Chubby's hog be "best in show"? WHY NOT!



THE MUSIC BOX

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert, Gladys Gale, Charlie Hall, Sam Lufkin, Lilyan Irene, William Gillespie. And, finally, the picture that put Stan and Babe in the Academy Hall of Fame - their only Oscar-winning motion picture. This is probably as perfect a comedy short as was ever made - silent or talkie. It is a film with so many nuances in both gags and performances that even after dozens of screenings it still seems fresh and absolutely delightful.

NEXT MEETING: _____



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - APRIL 26, 2009

SAILORS BEWARE

1927 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels silent with music Directed by Fred Guiol. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Anita Garvin, Frank Brownlee, Harry Earles, Tiny Sandford, Will Stanton, May Wallace, Lupe Velez. This is one of the early pairings of Laurel and Hardy though as yet they were not appearing as a "team". Stan is a hapless cabbie shanghaied aboard an ocean liner. Blustery Captain Brownlee puts him in Ollie's hands. Also aboard is a confidence duo led by a midget (Harry Earles, later of FREAKS fame). Hot tamale Lupe Velez, later RKO's "Mexican Spitfire", makes her second film appearance as Baroness Behr.

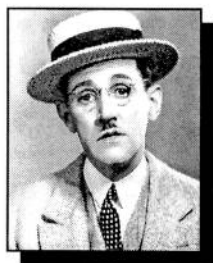


MICKEY'S POLO TEAM

1936 Walt Disney - United Artists One Reel Directed by David Hand. Voices: Walt Disney, Clarence Nash, Pinto Colvig. One of a series of cartoons made by Disney Studios that featured animated caricatures of Hollywood stars. Polo was THE sport of tinsel town (including a team comprised of the "British Colony") and Stan and Babe are two of the hapless players on the field.

HOG WILD

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Fay Holderness, Dorothy Granger, Charles MacMurphy. Here's a combo of two Laurel and Hardy settings - domestic Boys and working Boys. We're at the Hardy home. Ollie is ready to do guy stuff with Stanley but his wife insists he put up the radio aerial first. Stan assists. Heard on the soundtrack is Leroy Shield's song "Smile When The Raindrops Fall", written for a Charley Chase short.



IN WALKED CHARLEY

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by Warren Doane. With Charley Chase, Jacqueline Wells, Del Henderson, Billy Gilbert, Eddie Dunn, Harry Bernard. This will be, for many of you, your introduction to Charley Chase. Aside from fans of early comedy, Chase is today largely forgotten. Starting in the teens he made silent comedies as Charles Parrott (his real name) and played a character known as "Jimmy Jump". In the mid-20's he was billed as, and played, "Charley Chase" and starred in his own series through 1936 when Hal Roach closed down his short subjects unit. Chase then moved to Columbia as both an actor and director (for himself and The Three Stooges). A chronic alcoholic, Chase died at 47 in 1940. IN WALKED CHARLEY features Charley in an oft-repeated situation - where he nervously goes up against someone not quite in his right mind.

TIT FOR TAT

1935 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Charlie Hall, James C. Morton, Bobby Dunn. Finally, the sequel to our namesake short, THEM THAR HILLS (which we ran at our February opener). Stan and Ollie open their new Electric Supply Store. Being neighborly, they extend the hand of friendship to the grocers next door. Stan remembers them. The grocers remember Stan and Ollie. And, in the mind of Mr. Hall, all is NOT forgiven. This was the next-to-last Laurel and Hardy two-reeler and the second Laurel and Hardy film to be nominated for an Academy Award.



NEXT MEETING: _____



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - MAY 31, 2009

POPEYE THE SAILOR MEETS SINDBAD THE SAILOR

1936 Max Fleischer - Paramount Two Reels in Color Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of Jack Mercer, Mae Questel, Gus Wickie, Lou Fleischer. This was the first of three Max Fleischer Popeye "specials". Two reels in length and photographed in Technicolor, these specials were heavily promoted and commanded separate rental fees from exhibitors. Aside from the dazzling scenic design, 3-dimensional "stereoptical" animation and wonderful music score, SINDBAD benefits from Mercer and Wickie's superb adlib mutterings. SINDBAD was followed in 1937 by POPEYE MEETS ALI BABA AND HIS FORTY THIEVES and by ALADDIN AND HIS WONDERFUL LAMP in 1939.



HIGH AND DIZZY

1920 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by Hal Roach. With Harold Lloyd, Mildred Davis, Roy Brooks, Wallace Howe, William Gillespie, Noah Young. This is one of the dozens of two-reelers Harold Lloyd was making for Hal Roach each year during the late teens and early 1920's. By 1920 Lloyd had abandoned his "Lonesome Luke" character and was now being known simply as "the boy". He was making the most of his acrobatic prowess, which would be immortalized in his 1923 feature SAFETY LAST.

SONS OF THE DESERT

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Seven Reels Directed by William A. Seiter. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charley Chase, Mae Busch, Dorothy Christy, John Elliott, Sam Lufkin, Charlie Hall, John Merton, Stanley Blystone, Eddie Baker, Harry Bernard, voice of Billy Gilbert.

Well, here it is, the film that inspired our august organization. It also inspired THE HONEYMOONERS, THE FLINTSTONES and countless other domestic situation comedies. Basically, Stan and Ollie belong to the Los Angeles chapter of their lodge the Sons of the Desert. With their annual convention being held in Chicago, Ollie must get around his wife's refusal to allow him to attend by pretending to be seriously ill. A doctor is hired to tell Ollie's wife that he must go on a cruise for his nerves.

And there's the plot in a nutshell. Along the way, there are deliberate and often protracted set-pieces that often run against the traditional Laurel and Hardy pacing but are very much in keeping with director Bill Seiter's style. Fans of the Boys often have a hard time deciding whether SONS OF THE DESERT or WAY OUT WEST is their best feature-length comedy. Truth be told, the two films are so completely unlike in style and pacing that you almost need to consider both as the aggregate quintessential representation of Laurel and Hardy. SONS OF THE DESERT is very unique in that only one sequence contains any musical scoring - the convention sequence (though the newsreel shown does contain a music track). By 1933 the Roach films were invariably peppered with musical accompaniment, including the Laurel and Hardy features. Of course, THE MUSIC BOX went out sans music and won an Academy Award! Outstanding in the cast are "the ever-popular" Mae Busch as Mrs. Hardy, and Roach star comedian Charley Chase in a rare supporting role as a fellow "Son". Chase has an absolute ball playing a thoroughly obnoxious conventioneer. Roach fans - look sharp and you'll spot Harry Bernard playing a bartender AND a policeman.



NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY, JUNE 28TH



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - JUNE 28, 2009

DO DETECTIVES THINK?

1927 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels Directed by Fred Guiol. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Noah Young, Viola Richard, Frank Brownlee, Will Stanton, Wilson Bengie. This was the first film in which Laurel and Hardy appeared as a team wearing their customary hats. The bowler style is a bit prototypical here but essentially it's their traditional garb. Judge Finlayson sends "The Slasher" to the chair; but he escapes and promises revenge on the jurist. Enter Stan and Ollie as private detectives hired to protect Fin. Uh-oh.....



BARS AND STRIPES FOREVER



1939 Leon Schlesinger-Warner Bros. One Reel Directed by Ben Hardaway and Cal Dalton. Featuring the voices of Mel Blanc and Dave Weber. This one probably played on Warner bills with EACH DAWN I DIE. In any case, the gags are typical and the warden's voice, by Mel Blanc, is a caricature of a very popular Warner comedian of the day. Guess Hoo!!

THE HOOSGOW

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Tiny Sandford, Sam Lufkin, Charlie Hall, Ellinor Vanderveer, Leo Willis, Eddie Dunn. One of the early Laurel and Hardy talkies, this short could play silent as it features an abundance of pantomime. Dowager Ellinor Vanderveer was a comic foil for decades, being on the receiving end of innumerable pies, cakes and sprays from seltzer bottles. Mr. Finlayson here is the warden. By the time the boys returned to prison in PARDON US he was reduced to prison school teacher! D'OH!!!



EASY STREET

1917 Lone Star-Mutual Two Reels Directed by Charles Chaplin. With Charlie Chaplin, Edna Purviance, Albert Austin, Eric Campbell, Lloyd Bacon, Henry Bergman, Leo White. This was Chaplin's first release of 1917. His Mutual shorts were wildly popular and after three more pictures he would move to First National and then set up his own studio. Villain Eric Campbell was a perennial Chaplin co-star. He died a few days before Christmas, 1917, in an auto wreck resulting from driving while intoxicated. Unpaid funeral bills left his ashes undisposed of for 35 years. You can't make this stuff up.

THE MIDNIGHT PATROL

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Frank Brownlee, Charlie Hall, Frank Terry, Bob Kortman, James C. Morton, Edgar Dearing, Eddie Dunn, Tiny Sandford, voice of Billy Bletcher ("Look out boys.."). Not too much to say about this one. From the boys' peak period. They're policemen. Whatever possessed the city of Los Angeles!?!?



NEXT MEETING: JULY 26TH



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - JULY 26, 2009

THE LONESOME STRANGER

1940 MGM one reel Directed by Hugh Harman. Voices by Mel Blanc. Our Western program starts out with a full-color bang. While he seems old-hat today, in 1940 The Lone Ranger was a relatively new pulp hero, having premiered on radio in the mid-1930's and in movie serials in 1938. Satire was inevitable and this splendidly produced cartoon was typical of the high production values exhibited by MGM studios. Mel Blanc did a solo on this one - providing all the voices, including the horse (of course!).



HORSES COLLARS

1935 Columbia Two Reels Directed by Clyde Bruckman. With Moe Howard, Larry Fine, Curly Howard, Fred Kohler, Fred Kelsey, Slim Whitaker, Leo Willis. "Moe! Larry! CHEESE!" Yes, this is the famous Stooges short where Curly goes nuts whenever he sees a mouse and has to be soothed with cheese ("Roquefort! Roquefort!"). It's a standard horse-opera plot as the three cracked nuts try to retrieve an I.O.U. The cast is peppered with several western favorites as well as L&H nemesis Leo Willis.

WAY OUT WEST

1937 Hal Roach-MGM Seven Reels Directed by James W. Horne. A Stan Laurel Production. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Sharon Lynne, Rosina Lawrence, Stanley Fields, Vivien Oakland, The Avalon Boys with Chill Wills, James C. Morton, Frank Mills, Ed Brady, Jim Mason, Mary Gordon, May Wallace, Tex Driscoll, Flora Finch. A Masterpiece. Despite the Variety review printed on the flip side of this program, fans constantly debate which is Laurel and Hardy's best feature - SONS OF THE DESERT or WAY OUT WEST. For my money, this one wins hands down for all-out entertainment value. Great production, fast pace, charming musical interludes and some of the funniest set-pieces ever devised for Stan and Ollie. A bit of trivia - Tiny Sandford was originally cast as the Sheriff but was replaced by Stanley Fields. However, if you look closely at the long shot when the coach first pulls up in Brushwood Gulch you'll see Sandford as the burly lawman. The musical score by Marvin Hatley was nominated for an Academy Award.



NEXT MEETING: SEPTEMBER 12TH



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - SEPTEMBER 13, 2009

YOU'RE DARN TOOTIN'

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Edgar Kennedy and Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Otto Lederer, Wilson Benge, Charlie Hall, Rolfe Sedan, Sam Lufkin. One of the Boys' truly classic silent comedies. Just enough of a scenario to get them from the bandstand to the boarding house to the streets of Culver City where they literally scare the pants off passersby! Ever since 1927's THE BATTLE OF THE CENTURY, Stan and Ollie routinely found themselves in "tit for tat" situations. This is one of the best. YOU'RE DARN TOOTIN' is one of two Laurel & Hardy shorts directed by Edgar (E. Livingston) Kennedy, a frequent co-star of the Boys in both silent and early talkie shorts.



CHOOSE YOUR WEPPINS

1935 Max Fleischer-Paramount One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of William Costello, Mae Questel, Gus Wickie. Here's one of the few Popeye cartoons that did not feature the spinach-loving sailor's chief rival Bluto. Instead, the villain is a slick but swarthy greaseball who tries to put the moves on Olive.

Unaccustomed As We Are

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lewis R. Foster. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Edgar Kennedy, Thelma Todd. Unaccustomed as they were...to public speaking, that is, Stan and Ollie let their voices be heard for the first time in this domestic comedy that also features the aforementioned Mr. Kennedy. The plot is simple (they usually were) - Ollie brings Stan home for dinner but ball-and-chain Mae will have none of it. An innocent (aren't they always?) entanglement with Mrs. Kennedy (tragic beauty Thelma Todd) leads to eventual destruction and dissolution. This short was remade as the second half of the Boys' 1938 feature BLOCKHEADS. The boys were much more polished then but Minna Gombell was no match for Mae Busch! As for Thelma.....



AIR FRIGHT



1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Gus Meins. With Thelma Todd, Patsy Kelly, Don Barclay, Billy Bletcher, Wilfred Lucas, Gladys Blake, Charlie Hall, Bob McKenzie. Thelma Todd was teamed twice at Hal Roach - first with Zasu Pitts and then with brash, butch Patsy Kelly. The idea was to have a female Laurel and Hardy. The shorts featured plenty of outrageous gags and Todd-Pitts-Kelly certainly had diverting personalities. Thelma Todd was one of the great beauties of Hollywood but she apparently ran afoul of some repubates who wanted to muscle in on her restaurant. During the shooting of the 1936 Laurel and Hardy feature THE BOHEMIAN GIRL, Todd was found dead in her auto garage of carbon monoxide poisoning. While AIR FRIGHT may be one of Thelma's less glamorous vehicles, she sure fills out that stewardess uniform in a very shapely manner!

Towed in a Hole

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by George Marshall. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert. With the exception of a very brief appearance by Billy Gilbert, this short belongs entirely to Laurel and Hardy. The set-up is economy personified - fish salesman who decide to catch their own fish. All they need is a boat. Then, for two reels we watch as Stanley sabotages nearly every attempt made by Ollie to get their vessel (from Joe's Junk Yard) seaworthy. One of the greatest two reel comedies ever made.



NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 18TH



The Ellenville Public Library
& Museum

and



present

LAUREL AND HARDY: FROM SILENTS TO TALKIES

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy were both well-established film comedians when they appeared together in the 1926 Hal Roach short DUCK SOUP. Actually, Stan and "Babe" (as Hardy's friends referred to him) had encountered each other on screen for the first time in 1917 when Hardy played a stick-up man to Stan's man-about-town in LUCKY DOG. But DUCK SOUP is generally regarded as the boys' first joint appearance under the Hal Roach banner. They appeared in several more shorts together but not as a working pair. The first film in which they played a recognizable "team" was THE SECOND HUNDRED YEARS in 1927 and they remained so until Hardy's death in 1957.

Laurel and Hardy were unique among silent comedy stars in that they were able to make the transition to talking pictures better than any other screen comedian. They were fortunate in that their voices fit their appearance. More importantly, both were accomplished stage performers and were thus comfortable speaking dialogue in a manner befitting their respective personalities. Tonight's program will showcase the very best of Laurel and Hardy from the silent and sound eras.

TWO JARS

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, James Finlayson, Charlie Hall, Thelma Hill, Ruby Blaine, Edgar Dearing, Harry Bernard, Jack Hill, Sam Lufkin, Thomas Benton Roberts. This is one of the final entries in the Laurel and Hardy series of silent two-reelers. The Roach Studios property department went into overdrive on this one, creating and modifying dozens of tin lizzies for the climactic chaos.

HOG WILD

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Fay Holderness, Charles MacMurphy. The simplest of situations: Ollie has to put up a radio aerial ("Mrs. Hardy wants to get Japan!"). Stan helps. One of the musical themes heard on the soundtrack is "Smile When The Raindrops Fall", which was a song written for Hal Roach comedian Charley Chase.

THE MUSIC BOX

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert, Gladys Gale, Sam Lufkin, Lilyan Irene, William Gillespie, Charlie Hall. THE MUSIC BOX is the only Laurel and Hardy film to win an Academy Award as it was named Best Short Subject of 1932. This is the film that many people recall when they think of Laurel and Hardy. Stan and Ollie have a piano to deliver. Unfortunately, the house to which it belongs is at the top of a very, very, very long flight of stairs.

A TREE IN A TEST TUBE

1942 U.S. Agricultural Dept. Directed by Charles MacDonald.
With Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy. Narrated by a Smith named Pete. Filmed in 16mm Kodachrome.

THICKER THAN WATER

1935 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Daphne Pollard, Harry Bowen, Grace Goodall, Bess Flowers. This was Stan and Ollie's final short subject. After this picture, the Boys worked exclusively in feature length pictures. Daphne Pollard would repeat her role as Mrs. Hardy in the following year's feature OUR RELATIONS.

THE SONS OF THE DESERT was founded in 1965 by John McCabe, Chuck McCann, Orson Bean and a few other rabid enthusiasts as a way to perpetuate the lives and films of Laurel and Hardy. Stan Laurel, shortly before he died, gave his blessings for the club and insisted that the Sons maintain a "half-assed dignity". Since 1965 over 300 chapters, or tents, have sprouted and the Sons now number in the tens-of-thousands worldwide. The Ellenville "tent", THEM THAR HILLS (each tent is named after a Laurel & Hardy film title), was established in February 2009. Sons founding member Orson Bean visited the Ellenville tent during his Shadowland run of Arthur Miller's THE PRICE and he regaled members with stories about meeting Stan Laurel and the club's genesis. The Ellenville tent meets monthly and rest assured, we do indeed exude the prescribed "half-assed" dignity insisted upon by Mr. Laurel! For more information, visit <http://www.themtharhills.org>

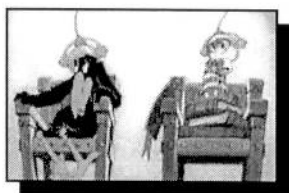


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - OCTOBER 18, 2009

HABEAS CORPUS

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott and Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Richard Carle, Charles Bachman, Charley Rogers. Our Scary Sunday begins with a classic silent in which the Boys are hired by a mad scientist to procure "subjects" for his experiments.



THE BOOKWORM TURNS

1940 Fred Quimby-MGM One Reel Directed by Hugh Harman. With the voice Mel Blanc. Another gorgeously designed and animated cartoon from MGM studios. This one features the Bookworm (from the previous cartoon of the same name) whose brain is transformed into the skull of a headache-suffering raven by Mr. Hyde (in the animated form of John Barrymore!).

MOAN AND GROAN INC.

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Robert McGowan. With Farina Hoskins, Chubby Chaney, Mary Ann Jackson, Wheezer Hutchins, Jackie Cooper, Edgar Kennedy and Max Davidson. Here's an early Our Gang talkie that co-stars two of Hal Roach's finest comedians - Edgar Kennedy and Max Davidson. Davidson starred in a series of silent two-reelers but when talkies came in he was relegated mostly to supporting roles. This was odd since Davidson played a Jewish character in silents and his natural dialect fit his persona perfectly when sound came in. As Max himself might have said, "Go explain!"



SPOOK LOUDER

1943 Columbia Two Reels Directed by Del Lord. With Moe Howard, Larry Fine, Curly Howard, Ted Lorch, Stanley Blystone, Symona Boniface, Lew Kelly, Charles Middleton. A classic shudderfest with the Three Stooges. They are hired by an inventor to guard his secret invention. This basic plot was adopted by Laurel and Hardy the following year in their 20th Century-Fox feature THE BIG NOISE.

The Live Ghost

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Walter Long, Arthur Housman, Mae Busch, Charlie Hall, Leo Willis, Harry Bernard, Baldwin Cooke, Dick Gilbert. Stan and Ollie are hired by Captain Long to help shanghai a crew. Instead of getting paid, they're dumped into the hole with the unwilling sailors. Turns out Long is piloting a supposed ghost ship.



Next Meeting: November 15th

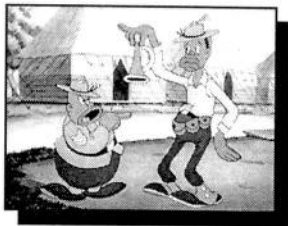


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 15, 2009

WITH LOVE AND HISSES 1927 Hal Roach-Pathe Two Reels

Directed by Fred Guiol. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Frank Brownlee, Anita Garvin, Jerry Mandy, Eve Southern, Will Stanton. We begin our Veteran's Day salute with Laurel and Hardy's first service comedy. WITH LOVE AND HISSES was made, however, before the Boys were officially a team. One interesting aspect of this short - except for Stan, all of the male actors in WITH LOVE AND HISSES are made-up au naturel. Stan wears his traditional clown pancake and is even more of a standout among the military recruits.



THE BOOGIE WOOGIE BUGLE BOY OF COMPANY 'B'

1941 Walter Lantz-Universal One Reel Directed by Walter Lantz. Hot Breath Harry is a horn hero sending them in Harlem. However, Harry receives "greetings" and is promptly tossed into the Negro Corps of the US army. The title song is from Universal's blockbuster comedy BUCK PRIVATES, released earlier in 1941. It was nominated for the Best Song Oscar in the 1941 Academy Awards and this subsequent animated version was nominee for Best Cartoon during the 1942 Awards (being released too late in 1941 to qualify for that year's nominations). Understandably, this cartoon is seldom shown in today's politically correct environment.

PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES

1932 Hal Roach - MGM 61 minutes.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Donald Dillaway, Jacquie Lynn, James Finlayson, Frank Brownlee, Billy Gilbert, Grady Sutton, Rychard Cramer, Charles Middleton, Richard Tucker, Mary Carr, Jim Mason, Adele Watson, Tom Kennedy, Muriel Evans, C. Montagu Shaw, Robert Barrat, Baldwin Cooke, Mary Gordon, Dick Gilbert, Lew Kelly, Charley Rogers, Elinor Vanerveer, Frank Rice, George Marshall. Veterans Day was, of course, originally celebrated as Armistice Day in honor of our First World War veterans. In PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES, Stan and Ollie are doughboys and, in due course, veterans of the Great War. This picture has many delicious moments including a hilarious drill routine with Frank Brownlee as the most exasperated sergeant in the history of military comedies. But the biggest surprise is the hilarious performance by director George Marshall as "Pierre" the company cook. The story concerns the Boys' antics in the army and their subsequent efforts to look after the child of a fallen comrade. There's a fine cast of supporting players including Charles "Ming the Merciless" Middleton, who had previously appeared with the Boys as the Foreign Legion commandant in BEAU HUNKS.



Our next meeting will be on Sunday, December 13th and will be our pot-luck Holiday Party.
On the big screen will be Stan and Ollie's Christmas Classic BABES IN TOYLAND



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - DECEMBER 13, 2009

TOYLAND PREMIERE 1934 Walter Lantz-Universal One Reel

This wonderful early Lantz cartoon features an all-star animated cast including Johnny Weissmuller and his then-wife Lupe Velez; Frankenstein's monster; Eddie Cantor; Shirley Temple and, of course, Laurel and Hardy. Tonight's print is of the 1940's reissue version with Carl Laemmle's name removed from the titles.



GOOD CHEER 1924 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels With Johnny Downs, Mickey Daniels, Farina Hoskins, Joe Cobb, Jackie Condon, Mary Kornman, Charlie Hall, Sam Lufkin, Noah Young. Here's a very rare Our Gang short from the silent days. The gang tries to help some orphan kids have a merry Christmas. They are, of course, as enterprising as ever! The synchronized musical score was produced using recordings by The Beau Hunks of Leroy Shields' famous themes that he composed for Hal Roach Studios.

BABES IN TOYLAND

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Nine Reels
With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlotte Henry, Henry Brandon, Felix Knight, Florence Roberts, William Burress, Kewpie Morgan, Marie Wilson, Billy Bletcher, Tiny Sandford, Tiny Lipson, John George, Angelo Rossitto, Gus Leonard, Jerry Tucker, Gene Reynolds, William Austin. This poor film has been so badly treated over the years it is amazing that it has survived intact. As early as the late 1940's, distributors began chopping pieces out of it. First thing to go was the title. When Federal Films bought the film from Hal Roach in 1948, they were unable to renew the license on the title from the Victor Herbert estate. Thus, the title was changed to MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS (the name under which the film continues to be marketed to television and on video). Next, the opening song by Virginia Karnes as Mother Goose was removed because she enters from within a book titled Babes in Toyland! Next, the "Go To Sleep Slumber Deep" sequence was removed because at the end of the scene Tom Tom and Bo Peep are seen sleeping beside one another (a no-no for the 1940's censors). Then close-ups of the dreaded Bogeymen were removed. Finally, the storybook End Title was replaced because it carried a NRA emblem (National Recovery Administration). The original nitrate fine grain of BABES IN TOYLAND was rescued from the vaults when this writer was assigned to track it down for a CBS Video release. Finding the original at George Eastman House in Rochester, a 16mm reduction negative of the first reel was made for inspection purposes. Fortunately, several prints were made of this footage, as well as of the cave scene and end title so that quite a few collectors now have complete prints of the film. BABES IN TOYLAND has been artificially colorized by two different companies. THEM THAR HILLS is pleased to be able to present the complete original black-and-white version of this timeless holiday classic.



HAVE A GREAT HOLIDAY! WE'LL SEE YOU IN MARCH, 2010!

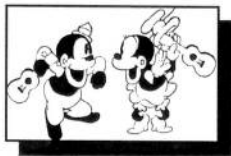


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - MARCH 14, 2010

FLYING ELEPHANTS

1928 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels Directed by Frank Butler.
With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Edna Marion, Dorothy Coburn, Viola Richard, Tiny Sandford, Leo Willis. This Laurel and Hardy silent short is so primitive it's pre-historic - literally! The Boys are neanderthals in the days before civilization. Yet the age-old conflict still abounds and Stan and Ollie are no exception to love's eternal conflicts. A total burlesque.



BOSKO'S STORE

1932 Warner Bros. One Reel Produced and Directed by Hugh Harman and Rudolf Ising. A Leon Schlesinger Production. Music by Frank Marsales. This is one of the early Merrie Melodie cartoons and features their somewhat indeterminate protagonists Bosko and Honey. As you'll understand after seeing it, this one had an edit or two made by some local stations before it was let on-air.

BELOW ZERO

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Frank Holliday, Tiny Sandford, Charlie Hall, Kay Deslys, Baldwin Cooke, Blanche Payson, Leo Willis. Well, I know we're all sorry to see winter ebb away (RIGHT!?!?) so here's a last gasp look at Jack Frost. The Boys are street musicians trying to eek out a living playing on the snow-laden streets. Their choice of selections, however, prove irksome but fate takes a hand and it looks like easy street is just around the corner....



COPS

1922 First National - Joseph M. Schenck Two Reels Directed by Eddie Cline and Buster Keaton. With Buster Keaton, Joe Roberts, Virginia Fox. What can we say, just one of the greatest two-reelers ever made and, along with his THE GENERAL, one of the films for which Keaton is best remembered. Basically, Buster is a ne'er do-well whose girl gives him one more chance to make good. As W.C. Fields would say, "Things Happen." By the way, today's print features a rather perfunctory organ score. But if you want to see COPS with an outstanding accompaniment, visit the Shadowland on March 20th. COPS is one of the shorts generously excerpted in Robert Youngson's WHEN COMEDY WAS KING featuring a superlative score by Ted Royal.

BUSY BODIES

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlie Hall, Tiny Sandford. We wind things up with one of the immortals. No plot, just Stan and Babe going-to-and-at work. At the lumber mill. What more do you NEED TO KNOW!? Even less dialogue than TOWED IN A HOLE yet sound plays a very important part in the film.



NEXT MEETING APRIL 11TH

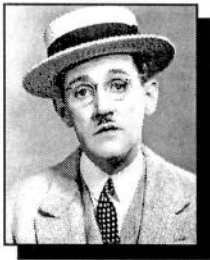


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - APRIL 11, 2010

PUPPET LOVE

1944 Famous Studios - Paramount One Reel Directed by Seymour Kneitel. With the voices of Jack Mercer, Jackson Beck and Mae Questel. For the most part, the Popeye cartoons became uninteresting with the shuttering of Max Fleischer Studios and the taking over of the franchise by Famous Studios (populated by many Fleischer veterans). However, there are a handful of terrific toons from the post-Fleischer period and PUPPET LOVE is one of the more entertaining. The series was on the cusp of becoming overly formulaic but this entry has some genuine laughs as Olive Oyl mistakes a bestringed version of her sailor man for the real McCoy.



FOUR PARTS

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Chase and Eddie Dunn. With Charley Chase, Betty Mack, Florence Roberts and Stymie Beard. Our merry mix-up festival continues with this innovative short in which Charley plays himself and three brothers. There isn't much plot, just an excuse for some extraordinary optical effects by Roy Seawright. Betty Mack plays a potential girlfriend who is concerned when Charley keeps changing his personality. Charley's Mom is played by Florence Roberts, whom some of you may remember as Mother Peep in BABES IN TOYLAND.

OUR RELATIONS

1936 Hal Roach-MGM Eight Reels Directed by Harry Lachman.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Alan Hale, James Finlayson, Daphne Pollard, Iris Adrian, Lona Andre, Betty Healy, Sidney Toler, Arthur Houseman, John Kelly, James C. Morton, Harry Bernard, Charlie Hall, Ralf Harolde, Noel Madison, Tiny Sanford, Del Henderson, Fred Holmes, Alex Pollard, Lee Phelps, Harry Wilson. OUR RELATIONS was the first of two films officially supervised by Stan Laurel (the second, WAY OUT WEST, actually carried an on-screen credit "A Stan Laurel Production"). Stan had been acting as defacto supervisor but was not given front office backing. Now he was in charge of how the money was spent as well as how the comedy was plotted and the result is easily the most handsome production in the Laurel and Hardy series. In addition to Rudolph

Mate's exquisite camerawork, the sets are of the highest art deco design and set the tone for Roach's blockbuster of the following year, TOPPER. As for the film, it's a deft blend of visual and verbal set-pieces with the Boys getting fine support from Daphne Pollard and Betty Healy as their wives. James Finlayson is given prime screen time, only to be topped in 1937's WAY OUT WEST. The director, Harry Lachman, would be reunited a few years later with Sidney Toler as they worked their way through several Charlie Chan mysteries at 20th Century-Fox. The music in OUR RELATIONS is all-new, although much of the score written for the picture by Leroy Shield was replaced by Shield's stock cues that he had newly-composed for the 1936-37 Our Gang program of shorts.



NEXT MEETING - MAY 16TH

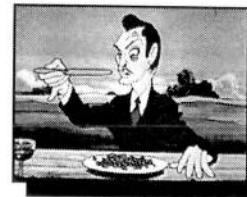


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - MAY 16, 2010

HOLLYWOOD PICNIC

1937 Charles Mintz - Columbia Pictures One Reel Directed by Arthur Davis. Here's another one of those animated antics showcasing the top dogs of tinseltown at play. In this one, the stars all head to the hills for a picnic and some sport. In addition to the Boys, many stars are caricatured, including the great John Barrymore and Columbia's own Three Stooges.



ANOTHER FINE MESS

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Thelma Todd, James Finlayson, Charles Gerard, Eddie Dunn, Harry Bernard. One of the early talkies, this extended-length short makes very good use of its time. Gags are built upon with multiple toppers; Stan gets to present an alternate (and how!) characterization; lovely Thelma Todd is as charming as could be; silly-ass Charles Gerard (who also appeared in Universal's DRACULA the same year) brings a bit of the English Music Hall feeling to the proceedings; and our old friend Fin takes it big! This was the only Laurel and Hardy short to be introduced by Beverly and Betty Mae Crane - the "Talking Titles". The usher-outfitted pair announced the credits on several other Hal Roach shorts.

THE BANK DICK

1940 Universal Pictures Eight Reels Directed by Eddie Cline. Screenplay by Mahatma Kane Jeeves. With W. C. Fields, Una Merkel, Grady Sutton, Franklin Pangborn, Shemp Howard, Cora Witherspoon, Jessie Ralph, Dick Purcell, Al Hill, George Moran, Evelyn Del Rio, Russell Hicks, Pierre Watkin, Harlan Briggs, Nora Cecil, Bill Wolfe, Jack Norton, Pat West, Reed Hadley, Bil Alston, Eddie Acuff, Eddie Dunn, Margaret Seddon, Jan Duggan, Dave Oliver. Well, it's Guest Star month and for our feature presentation we present the Great Man himself in what is arguably his drop-down funniest vehicle. Fields had made a series of unique and leisurely-paced features for Paramount during the early-to-mid 30's. However, diminishing returns led to his contract not being renewed. After gaining much popularity on the radio doing battle with dummy Charlie McCarthy on The Chase and Sanborn Hour, Universal signed Fields and Edgar Bergen (along with his wooden stooge) to star in YOU CAN'T CHEAT AN HONEST MAN. The picture was a box office smash and Fields was brought back to co-star with Mae West in MY LITTLE CHICKADEE. For his third Universal picture, Fields concocted an original "everyman" story similar to his Paramount vehicles but with a decided ratcheting-up of the pace and an accent on bizarre happenings. Fields seemed to stride-unphased through a world of small town surrealism and was aided by an incredible supporting cast of second bananas. Eddie Cline, a former Keystone Kop and now Universal's top comedy helmer, put it all together in an outstanding package that thrilled exhibitors. Fields' follow-up to THE BANK DICK lacked any sense of lucidity and even had studio executives scratching their heads. That NEVER GIVE A SUCKER AN EVEN BREAK was released in the same season as Olsen & Johnson's HELLZAPOPPIN' must have had Hollywood wondering if Universal had lost their sanity!



NEXT MEETING - JUNE 13TH - BARBECUE!



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - JUNE 13, 2010

SUGAR DADDIES

1927 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels Directed by Fred Guiol. With James Finlayson, Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Noah Young, Charlotte Mineau, Edna Marion, Eugene Pallette, Jack Hill, Charlie Hall, Sam Lufkin. This is one of the Boys' early appearances together, and in this picture they do not work as a team. Stan plays Fin's lawyer who is called in after a rough night and, apparently, a proposal of marriage! Some great location photography in this short, including at the Fun House of the Nu Pike Amusement Park in Long Beach.



I'M DICKENS - HE'S FENSTER

1962 Leonard Stern - Heyday Productions 25 minutes With John Astin, Marty Ingels, Emmaline Henry and Frank DeVol. In honor of John Astin appearing this summer at the Shadowland Theatre in GUEST ARTIST, we're opening the show with a very, very rare episode of the cult television series I'M DICKENS - HE'S FENSTER. Astin co-starred in this Leonard Stern (GET SMART) comedy series with actor-turned-agent-turned-litigator Marty Ingels. Also on the show were Emmaline Henry (who later played Major Bellows' wife on I DREAM OF JEANNIE) and Frank DeVol. Yes, the same Frank DeVol who scored all those Rock Hudson-Doris Day pictures and who later appeared as Happy Kyne (with His Mirthmakers) on FERNWOOD 2 NIGHT.

LOVE BUSINESS

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Robert McGowan. An Our Gang Comedy starring Jackie Cooper, Chubby Chaney, Wheezer Hutchins, Dorothy DeBorba, Mary Ann Jackson, Farina Hoskins, Stymie Beard, Donald Haines, Clifton Young, May Wallace, and June Marlowe as Miss Crabtree. A classic GANG short with one of the best bits featuring recently-departed Dorothy DeBorba. With all the smarmy kids on television today, these charming shorts are surely refreshing. Farewell, little Echo.



THE PERFECT DAY

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, Kay Deslys, Isabelle Keith, Harry Bernard, Balwin Cooke, Lyle Tayo, Charley Rogers. An early talkie classic with the simplest of premises. The Laurels and the Hardys decide to go on a picnic. Coming along for the fun is Uncle Edgar, unfortunately suffering from gout ("too much high living" as Billy Gilbert would say!). As the Chinese say, a journey begins with a single step. Well, watch that first step cause it's a doosey and Stan & Babe have a devil of a time getting started on their "perfect day".

NEXT EVENT - WE'LL BE MARCHING IN THE ELLENVILLE JULY 4TH PARADE!

NEXT MEETING - JULY 25TH



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - JULY 25, 2010

KATNIP KOLLEGE

1938 Leon Schlesinger - Warner Bros. One Reel Supervised by Cal Dalton and Cal Howard. With the voices of Johnnie "Scat" Davis and Mabel Todd. This delightful musical Merrie Melodie was produced at the same time as Warners' feature hit HOLLYWOOD HOTEL and featured the voices of two of that picture's players - Johnnie Davis and Mabel Todd. In addition, one of the hit songs from HOTEL also appeared - "Let That Be A Lesson to You". In fact, KATNIP KOLLEGE has one of the finest song scores of any Warner Bros. Cartoon.



TEACHER'S PEST

1939 Columbia Two Reels Directed by Del Lord. With Charley Chase, Ruth Skinner, Richard Fiske, Chester Conklin, Bud Jamison, Hank Bell, Vernon Dent. Most difficult to see of the classic two-reelers are the shorts that Charley Chase made for Columbia Pictures after leaving Hal Roach. Next to the Three Stooges comedies, the Chase pictures are probably the Columbia shorts that hold up best over the years. Prints of these films are very rare and tonight's title is a piece of cinema archaeology. It was made up for early television for the South American market. The plus side is that it was struck directly from a 35mm negative; the minus is that it has somewhat intrusive Spanish subtitles. Also - the addition of the supplemental subtitle negative affected the printing exposure. Nevertheless, it's a real treat and should serve well as an example of Chase's work at Chez Cohn until Sony/Columbia decides to release these classics on DVD. Don't hold your breath.

A Chump at Oxford

1940 Hal Roach-United Artists 63 minutes Directed by Alfred Goulding. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Wilfred Lucas, Forrester Harvey, James Finlayson, Anita Garvin, Forbes Murray, Vivien Oakland, Peter Cushing, Charlie Hall, Gerald Rogers, Jean de Briac, Rex Lease, Sam Lufkin. A CHUMP AT OXFORD was the next-to-last film that Laurel and Hardy made for producer Hal Roach. The film was originally planned as a four-reel "streamliner" and, in fact, was released in the United States that way. However, the overseas markets had little use for the odd format so additional scenes were filmed and a feature-length version was sent overseas. When the film was reissued in the late 1940's, the full 63 minute version was shown. The feature version was also used for the subsequent television syndication package. The major difference between the two versions is the opening sequence at the employment agency and ensuing banquet scene wherein Stan and Ollie perform a remake of their silent classic FROM SOUP TO NUTS. The short version of CHUMP begins with the Boys sweeping the streets. Regardless of which version you see, A CHUMP AT OXFORD is one of the most enjoyable Laurel and Hardy films as it gives Stan the very rare opportunity to step outside his otherwise exclusive "Stanley" personality. Here Mr. Laurel displays an elevated level of sophisticated banter that would have suited him greatly had he decided to include character work in his repertory. But, such was not to be and Stan only made one more film in which he displayed a supplemental character - that of Don Sebastian in THE BULLFIGHTERS. A CHUMP AT OXFORD had comedian Harry Langdon among its scenarists (he had previously collaborated on the screenplays to the Boys' BLOCKHEADS and THE FLYING DEUCES). Although released in early 1940, A CHUMP AT OXFORD was filmed in 1939 and was released as one of the films celebrating United Artists' 20th Anniversary (Roach's OF MICE AND MEN was also a UA 20th Anniversary release). Finally, take a close look at the Oxford students who make sport of Stan and Ollie. One of them is a very young Peter Cushing - long before he took up hunting vampires and commanding Imperial Starships in that galaxy far, far away.



NEXT MEETING - AUGUST 15TH



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - AUGUST 15, 2010

MEN O' WAR

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lewis R. Foster. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Ann Cornwall, Gloria Greer, Charlie Hall, Baldwin Cooke. Another short that finds Stan and Ollie in uniform. Believe it or not, after TWO TARS they are still in the Navy. Once again on leave and chasing skirts, the boys encounter two prospects in the park and proceed to offer refreshments. What follows is a variation on an old burlesque routine later adopted, and performed many times, by Abbott and Costello. The second reel is more action-oriented as the quartet decides to go for a boat ride in the lake. This cannot end well.



A DREAM WALKING

1934 Max Fleischer - Paramount One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of Billy Costello, Mae Questel and William Pennell. A DREAM WALKING is one of the most memorable of all the Fleischer Popeyes. The haunting melody, "Did You Ever See A Dream Walking" was written by Mack Gordon and Harry Revel for Paramount's SITTING PRETTY of the previous year. It was sung in the film by Ginger Rogers but gained popularity via Bing Crosby's record for Columbia. The toon has a simple premise - Olive Oyl is sleepwalking above the city streets. Bluto and Popeye each vie for the chance to rescue her. A leisurely pace and some interesting perspective animation make this one a real treat.

SCREEN SNAPSHOTS: HOLLYWOOD GROWS UP

1954 Columbia One Reel Directed by Ralph Staub. With Ralph Staub, Larry Simms, George Burns and Gracie Allen, Rita Hayworth, Bud Abbott and Lou Costello. This is one of the long-running series of souvenir reels by Mr. Staub that offered candid looks at Hollywood stars. Here, Staub reunites with Larry Simms, formerly "Baby Dumpling" of the Blondie films, and looks back at some earlier clips from the series. The actual sequences are from 1942 and show why the incomparable Rita was such a hit with the soldiers and also gives a look at a very rare - and seldom shown - performance of "Who's On First" by Messrs. Abbott and Costello.



SATURDAY AFTERNOON

1924 Mack Sennett - Pathé Exchange Three Reels Directed by Harry Edwards. With Harry Langdon, Alice Ward, Vernon Dent, Ruth Hiatt, Peggy Montgomery, Leo Willis. Harry Langdon's career certainly had its ups and downs. Most of the ups took place during the period when his films were being written and/or directed by Frank Capra. This is one of Langdon's best and it features a script by Capra and Arthur Ripley. It's a simple premise (the best ones always are) - Harry's buddy (future Stooge nemesis Vernon Dent) goads him into slipping away from the wife for an afternoon of fun and frolic. The comedy is often subtle, the photography classy and SATURDAY AFTERNOON remains one of the high marks in the Langdon canon.

THEIR FIRST MISTAKE

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by George Marshall. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Billy Gilbert, George Marshall. One of the all-time crowd-pleasers. Mrs. Hardy takes a powder. Stan suggests trying to win her back by adopting a baby. This picture was made before the Breen Office was established to enforce the Motion Picture Code. This picture, along with Mae West, may well have been one of the reasons for its establishment!



NEXT MEETING - SEPTEMBER 19TH



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - SEPTEMBER 19, 2010

SHOULD MARRIED MEN GO HOME?

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott and Leo McCarey With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, Kay Deslys, Dorothy Coburn, Charlie Hall, Sam Lufkin, Edna Marion, Viola Richard, Lyle Tayo. One of the last of the Laurel and Hardy silent comedies, part domestic strife, part slapstick battle royale. Once again, Stan enjoys the bachelor's life and Ollie has made the marital leap. After realizing that a quiet day at home with hubby is not to be, Mrs. Hardy sends Ollie off to the golf course with Stan. A couple of girls, some hijinks on the links, and the irrepressible Edgar Kennedy set the stage for yet another tit-for-tat finale.



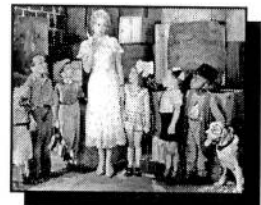
PHILIPS BROADCAST OF 1938

1938 George Pal Productions One Reel Directed by George Pal. With the talents of Ambrose and His Orchestra. This early George Pal Puppetoon was produced as a sponsored animated short for the Philips Radio Company. Originally released in England, it features some typical British dance band performances (including the haunting "Harbor Lights" and winds up with an admittedly stereotypical Harlem swing number. Eventually Pal would come to America and produce a long-running series of Puppetoon shorts for Paramount Pictures. We'll be screening many of these here at Them Thar Hills.

**George Pal
Puppetoons**

SHIVER MY TIMBERS

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Directed by Robert McGowan. With Wheezer Hutchins, Stymie Beard, Dorothy DeBorba, Sherwood Bailey, Jerry Tucker, Cotton Beard, June Marlowe, Billy Gilbert, Jack Hill, Dick Gilbert, Sly Slocum, Harry Bernard. In honor of today being National Talk Like a Pirate Day, we present this Our Gang Comedy in which the kids play hooky so they can listen to grizzled sea captain Billy Gilbert tell his tall tales of the sea. Miss Crabtree gets an idea, however, to spook the kids into forsaking the sea for the schoolroom. Captain Gilbert is more than happy to join in the fun - much to his eventual regret!



BEAU HUNKS

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Four Reels Directed by James Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charles Middleton, Harry Schultz, Broderick O'Farrell, Dick Gilbert, Charlie Hall, Leo Willis, Tiny Sandford, "Abdul Kasim K'Horne". Hal Roach began his program of "streamliners" in 1940, but this was an early four-reel featurette that, in 1931, exhibitors found difficulty fitting into their schedules. Nevertheless, it's a well-paced comedy with Ollie dragging Stan with him to join the Foreign Legion. For years, it was assumed that this picture was a satire on the Ronald Colman classic BEAU GESTE. But, in fact, it is a direct take-off on that picture's sequel, BEAU IDEAL, with many of the original's sequences burlesqued. Both novels were written by Percival Christopher Wren and the Hal Roach gag writers had a field day poking fun at the grim set-pieces in the Wren original. Co-starring as the Commandant is Charles Middleton, who movie fans will recognize (at least his rich voice) as Ming the Merciless from the Flash Gordon serials. Laurel and Hardy would do another hitch in the Foreign Legion eight years later in the Borris Morros-RKO production THE FLYING DEUCES, again with Mr. Middleton appearing as the much-aggravated commanding officer.



NEXT MEETING - OCTOBER 17TH



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - OCTOBER 17, 2010



OLIVER THE EIGHTH

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Jack Barty. A fun shudderfest with the Boys. Stan and Ollie both decide to answer an ad to marry a "wealthy young widow". Unbeknownst to them, the widow has a habit of marrying men named Oliver - and then disposing of them! So Ollie gets picked and, with Stan in tow, is in for a night of terror.

HYDE AND HARE

1955 Warner Bros. One Reel Directed by Friz Freleng. Voice characterization by Mel Blanc. Bugs gets adopted by a nice, meek little man. Who turns out to be Dr. Jekyll. Who turns into Mr. Hyde. Who is not a nice, meek little man!

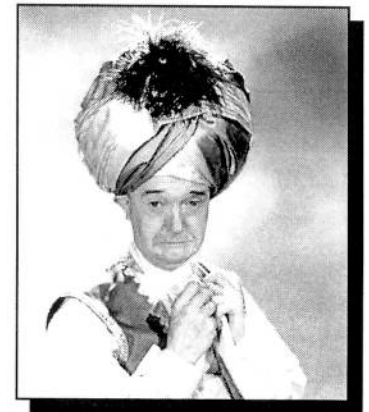


A-HAUNTING WE WILL GO

1942 20th Century-Fox 68 minutes Directed by Alfred L. Werker. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Dante the Magician, Sheila Ryan, John Shelton, James Bush, Lou Lubin, Richard Lane, Mantan Moreland, Don Costello, Ed Gargan, Elisha Cook Jr., Addison Richards, George Lynn, Robert Emmett Keane, Willie Best, Wade Boteler, Edgar Dearing, Tom Dugan, Ralph Dunn, Frank Faylen, Bud Geary, Wilbur Mack, Terry Moore, Walter Sande, Leon Tyler, Eddy Waller. This is our first screening of one of Laurel and Hardy's features made after they left Hal Roach Studios. The Boys made six features for 20th Century-Fox and two for MGM. We have all six of the Fox features in the Rialto collection. Ever since William K. Everson wrote his definitive book, THE FILMS OF LAUREL AND HARDY, the Fox features have been regarded as decidedly lower-class fare. And, to a certain extent, this is true. The Fox factory system was far more compartmentalized than the family atmosphere at Roach. Screenwriter Lou Breslow was not a comedy specialist, although he did contribute sequences to the W. C. Fields classic IT'S A GIFT. The director, Alfred Werker, had made the very successful though leisurely-paced HOUND OF THE

BASKERVILLES with Basil Rathbone. But, again, he was not a comedy veteran. To a degree, Stan and Ollie are a bit swamped amid the large supporting cast and, of course, the billing spotlight is shared with Harry Jensen aka Dante the Magician. Dante was born in Denmark and grew up in Minnesota. Still a teenager, Jensen was taken under the wing of magician Harry Thurston and soon took on the stage name Dante. He created extravagant stage shows and gave the world his trademark incantation - "Sim Sala Bim!" Dante passed away in 1955 but "Sim Sala Bim" lived on, being intoned by Karnack the Magnificent on THE TONIGHT SHOW WITH JOHNNY CARSON.

A-HAUNTING WE WILL GO was the second film that Stan and Babe made for Fox, the first being GREAT GUNS. HAUNTING has probably has the least going for it overall of the Fox films but remains a pleasant diversion and certainly deserves continued appraisal despite Professor Everson's condemnation of 43 years ago.



Our special thanks to Joe Bevilacqua, Lorie Kellogg, Kenny Savoy and Steve "Silver Throat" Krulick for their live presentation of The Harold Peary Show: "Attack of the Creepy Crawly Things from Outer Space"

NEXT MEETING - NOVEMBER 21ST - POT LUCK DINNER!



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 21, 2010

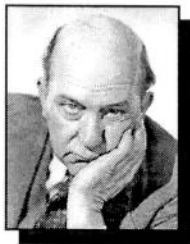


LEAVE 'EM LAUGHING

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Clyde Bruckman. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, Otto Fries, Dorothy Coburn, Sam Lufkin, Edgar Dearing. An archtypical Laurel and Hardy silent short with the basic premise being that Stan has a toothache. A trip to the dentist results in several funny bits. The trip FROM the dentist includes a laughing sequence that cameraman George Stevens later repeated when he directed the Astaire-Rogers classic SWING TIME. Otto Fries, as the dentist, repeated his role when Stan and Ollie re-did the dentist visit in their first feature PARDON US.

The Old Man of the Mountain

1933 Max Fleischer - Paramount. Directed by Dave Fleischer. Featuring the voices of Bonnie Poe, Cab Calloway, William Pennell. This is one of the most famous Betty Boop cartoons, mainly due to the subversive contribution by that reefer man Calloway and his Orchestra.



LOCKS AND BONDS

1937 RKO Radio Two Reels Directed by Leslie Goodwins. With Edgar Kennedy, Vivien Oakland, Eddie Dunn. Next to Hal Roach and Columbia, the most prolific producer of comedy shorts during the 1930's and 40's was RKO. The unit was initially headed by Lou Brock, then Bert Gilroy and later George Bilson. While there were many one-and-two shot series stars (Phil Harris, Lucille Ball) and a substantial series starring Clark and McCullough that ended upon Paul McCullough's suicide, the two series that lasted the longest were the Leon Errol Shorts and the Edgar Kennedy "Family Man" shorts. The Kennedy format was the closest of all the shorts series to latter-day television situation comedies. Edgar was married and was saddled not only with a scatter-brained wife (usually played by Florence Lake) but also with a live-in mother-in-law (Dot Farley) and live-in brother-in-law (Jack Rice for the lenghtiest period). The Kennedy series ran from 1931 to 1948, with the last of the shorts released a month before Kennedy's death. LOCKS AND BONDS is one of the few

Kennedy's that does not co-star Florence Lake but features Roach player Vivien "a lot of weather we've been having lately!" Oakland as Edgar's wife. During the 1960's and 70's, the RKO shorts appeared on WNEW's late-night program REEL CAMP. For the past three decades, however, the library has been out of official distribution, with only isolated titles that have fallen into public domain finding obscure release to the home video market. Them Thar Hills is pleased to have quite a few of these elusive shorts available in 16mm and we will be peppering our programs with them in seasons to come.



ON THE LOOSE

1931 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Produced and Directed by Hal Roach. With Thelma Todd, Zasu Pitts, John Loder, Claud Allister, Billy Gilbert, Gordon Douglas, Otto Fries, Charlie Hall, Two Familiar Suitors. A very fun entry in the Todd-Pitts series with Thelma and Zasu disgusted by their constant parade of gentlemen friends who think a "big time" is a trip to Coney Island. British leading man John Loder (Hitchcock's SABOTAGE) makes a rare appearance in a comedy two-reeler and the film has some other welcome surprises as well. By the way, the Coney Island scenes were shot at the Venice Amusement Pier, which also served as the locale for the Our Gang classic FISH HOOKY.

The Fixer Uppers

1935 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Charles Middleton, Arthur Houseman. Well, what better way to head into the holiday season than with Stan and Ollie selling greeting cards. In a structure similar to their earlier ONE GOOD TURN, the Boys find themselves, in going door-to-door, insinuating themselves into a fellow citizen's problem. In this case, it is Mae Busch, who is unsure of her husband's affections. She suggests that Ollie make love to her and, if her husband is jealous, she will be reassured of his devotion. Of course, not only is the husband jealous but he is not to be trifled with. The rest is pure agony!



**HAVE A HAPPY THANKSGIVING, A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A
WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON! SEE YOU IN 2011!**

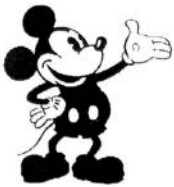


THEM THAR HILLS - Tent # 281

FILM PROGRAM - MARCH 6, 2011

THEM THAR HILLS

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert, Mae Busch, Charlie Hall, Dick Alexander, Bobby Dunn, Sam Lufkin, Eddie Baker. Well, what better way to open the season than with a revival of the Tent's Laurel and Hardy titlesake. Thanks to his propensity to overindulge, Ollie is ordered by Dr. Gilbert to take a trip up into the mountains where, of course, things happen! In addition to the antique charmer "The Old Spinning Wheel", Marvin Hatley's "I Wake Up With A Song" is heard on the soundtrack in this classic short. And Tent members will see right away why Mae Busch and Charlie Hall are part of our regular ceremonial proceedings.



PLAYFUL PLUTO

1934 Walt Disney-United Artists One Reel Directed by Burt Gillett.

Featuring the voices of Walt Disney and Pinto Colvig. Here's a pretty simple Disney toon, with Mickey trying to do some yardwork and Pluto providing the sabotage at every turn. This short is notable in that it was excerpted as the movie shown to the road gang in an old church in Preston Sturges' SULLIVAN'S TRAVELS.

MIGHTY LIKE A MOOSE

1926 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Leo McCarey.

With Charley Chase, Vivien Oakland, Ann Howe, Charles Clary, Gale Henry, Harry Bowen, Charlie Hall, Rolfe Sedan. Leo McCarey is famous today as the director of such enduring classics as THE AWFUL TRUTH, LOVE AFFAIR and GOING MY WAY. But back in the mid-twenties, he and Charley Chase were collaborating on a series of two-reelers for Hal Roach that stand up as some of the greatest shorts of the silent era. MIGHTY LIKE A MOOSE is one of those gems. When you see it, you will realize how utterly implausible a scenario it is. But it is also utterly hilarious. Have Fun! By the way, MIGHTY LIKE A MOOSE was remade in 1956 as a Joe McDoakes short SO, YOU WANT TO BE PRETTY.



THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

1952 TCA Filmed at Hal Roach Studios

Directed by Jean Yarbrough. With Bud Abbott, Lou Costello, Hillary Brooke, Sidney Fields, Gordon Jones, Joe Kirk, Joe Besser, Elvia Allman, Sarah Padden. Since March 6th is Lou Costello's birth date, we figured a show about Lou's Birthday was appropriate. And, it gives us a chance to get Bud and Lou into a Sons program. This is from the glorious first season of the show where surrealism ruled and the laugh track was mostly Bud and Lou's relatives watching an edited print of the show!

BERTH MARKS

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lewis R. Foster
With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Tom Harmon, Harry Bernard, Charlie Hall, Baldwin Cooke, Silas Wilcox, Sam Lufkin. Stan and Ollie are a big-time vaudeville act and they have to take the train to Pottsville. That's all. But, of course, it isn't.... By the way, the bulk of material from this short was incorporated into the Spanish-language edition of THE LAUREL-HARDY MURDER CASE: NOCHE DE DUENDES.



Next Meeting: Sunday, April 3rd, 2011



THEM THAR HILLS - Tent # 281

FILM PROGRAM - APRIL 3, 2011

BRATS

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy. Well, since this is Guest Star month and we only have one short with our immortal Boys, we thought we'd at least give you a Double Dose of Laurel and Hardy! In BRATS, Stan and Ollie play themselves AND their own children. The short is a delightful exercise in creative set-dressing, clever special effects, wonderful pantomime and pure L&H silliness. If there is a message in this film, it might be that grown-ups can be just as childish - perhaps moreso - than their offspring. A soundtrack note. BRATS was reissued in 1937 with a new modern musical score by Leroy Shield. This is the version being shown this evening.



HELLZAPOPPIN' 1941 Universal 84 minutes Directed by H. C. Potter.

With Ole Olsen, Chic Johnson, Martha Raye, Hugh Herbert, Jane Frazee, Robert Paige, Lewis Howard, Clarence Kolb, Mischa Auer, Shemp Howard, Jody Gilbert, Nella Walker, Richard Lane, George Chandler, Elisha Cook Jr., Harlem Congaroo Dancers, Andrew Tombes, Hal K. Dawson, Frank Darien, Eddie Acuff, Billy Curtis, Dale Van Sickel, Gus Schilling, Sig Arno, Bert Roach, Fred Sanborn, Samuel S. Hinds, Bill Alston, Danny Beck.

Our April Fools Guest Star Month presentation is one of the most subversive, anarchic entertainments ever produced. Originally presented on Broadway in 1938, running for over 1,400 performances, HELLZAPOPPIN' was a tossed salad of skits, songs, specialty numbers and general pandamonium. Theatergoers routinely revisited the show and were gleefully surprised by new shtick thrown into the soup on a moments' notice. But, as the director in the film (Richard Lane) declares, "This is Hollywood, we change everything!" So, in fact, the film version of HELLZAPOPPIN' features a somewhat typical Hollywood romance. But that's where the typicality ends. There are cinematic in-jokes, guest appearances from the Universal gang of hobgoblins, technical snafus and one of the greatest Lindy Hop numbers put on film. HELLZAPOPPIN was successful enough at the box office for Universal to bring Olsen and Johnson back for a picture-a-year for the next three years. The first of these follow-ups, CRAZY HOUSE, opened with the pranksters returning victoriously to Universal Pictures, only to be met at the studio gates by armed guards and canon. Then followed a musical spookfest called GHOST CATCHERS (with a witty nod to Abbott & Costello's HOLD THAT GHOST) and a film version of Milton Berle's Broadway hit SEE MY LAWYER. This last picture featured less Olsen & Johnson and more specialty acts, resulting in poor box office receipts and the end of the team's picture career. They happily returned to the stage for another decade of corn-fed comedy. The lifelong friends, first teamed in 1914, also managed Olsen & Johnson's Winter Garden Farm Restaurant on Route 52 in Carmel, NY. Ole Olsen and Chic Johnson died less than a year apart of each other and are buried side-by-side in Las Vegas.

A personal note about HELLZAPOPPIN' from the Grand Sheik: I have always felt that the pacing, editing and camera style of Universal's HELLZAPOPPIN' was very much unlike any other work by director H. C. Potter. It is, in fact, uncannily similar to the work of Universal's ace comedy director Eddie Cline, who directed Olsen and Johnson's subsequent features for the studio. Though I have no studio memos or other verification, it is my considered belief that the picture was largely supervised by Cline. Some may recall that our last year's April Fools feature was THE BANK DICK with W. C. Fields, directed by Eddie Cline.

Next Meeting: Sunday, May 1st, 2011

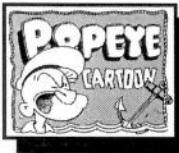


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - MAY 1, 2011

BACON GRABBERS

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lewis R. Foster. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, Jean Harlow, Harry Bernard, Eddie Baker, Charlie Hall, Bobby Dunn, Sam Lufkin. One of the Boys' last silent shorts has Stan and Ollie as repo-men assigned to take back a radio whose payments have been defaulted on by Mr. Kennedy. Lovely Jeanie-Weanie Harlow plays Mrs. Kennedy, though her appearance is perfunctory.



WILD ELEPHINKS

1933 Max Fleischer-Paramount One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of William Costello, Bonnie Poe and William Pennell. Popeye and Olive find themselves marooned on the coast of Africa and encounter various "aminals".

CHICKENS COME HOME

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Thelma Todd, James Finlayson, Patsy O'Byrne, Frank Holliday, Norma Drew, Frank Rice, Baldwin Cooke, Charles K. French. This three-reeler is actually a remake of the silent short LOVE 'EM AND WEEP, only with Finlayson and Hardy reversing roles as Butler and Husband. A blackmailing vampire out of Hardy's past shows up and blackmails him, threatening his political campaign. Stan is given the job of keeping her away from Ollie's house. The Spanish-language version of this short, POLITIQUERIAS, includes a lengthy and quite bizarre interlude with a magician entertaining the Hardy household.



THE PHARMACIST

1933 Mack Sennett-Paramount Two Reels Directed by Arthur Ripley. With W.C. Fields, Elise Cavana, Babe Kane, Grady Sutton, Lorena Carr, Julia Griffith, Si Jenks, Arthur Thalasso. This is the third of Field's quartet of shorts made for Mack Sennett while under contract to Paramount. It is somewhat of a dress rehearsal for the next year's IT'S A GIFT, which is one of the great vaudevillian's cinema classics. The pacing here is often painfully deliberate and Fields' set-upon (at work and at home) tragedian was the everyman of the Depression.

GOING BYE BYE

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Walter Long, Sam Lufkin, Harry Dunkinson, Murdock MacQuarrie, Tiny Sandford, Lester Dorr, Fred Holmes, Elinor Van Devere. For years, GOING BYE BYE suffered indifferent regard from critics, but over the years as it enjoyed audience screenings its reputation has increased and it is now considered one of Laurel and Hardy's great comedies. After testifying and sending "Butch" Long to prison, Stan and Ollie are advised to get out of town. With insufficient funds for the trip, they advertise for a travelling companion. Who should reply but the Ever-Popular Mae Busch. But that's only half the story....



Next Meeting: Sunday, June 5th, 2011

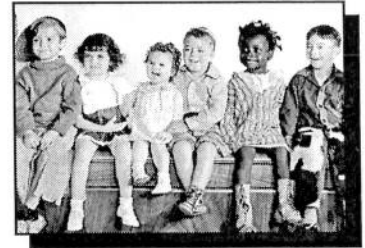


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - JUNE 5, 2011

OUR GANG FOLLIES OF 1936

1935 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Gus Meins. With Spanky McFarland, Alfalfa Switzer, Scotty Beckett, Darla Hood, Buckwheat Thomas, Porky Lee, Dickie Jones, Leonard Kibrick, Sidney Kibrick, Jerry Tucker, Delmar Watson. This was the first of the Our Gang "revue" shorts in which Roach's Rascals put on their dancing shoes. In fact, this short is one of the first barnyard show pictures, even pre-dating Mickey and Judy. One gag in the picture is cut from the King World television prints and involves a group of scared black kids. Roach was actually very progressive having black and white kids playing together in the Our Gang shorts. But once in a while he hugged the line with some awkward racial humor. That said, the later MGM-produced shorts were merciless on poor Buckwheat and regularly inserted tasteless jokes at his expense. Some trivia - "Dickie", who helps Spanky backstage, is played by Dickie Jones, who later was a page boy in MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON and was also the voice of Walt Disney's PINOCCHIO.



BONNIE SCOTLAND

1935 Hal Roach-MGM 80 minutes Directed by James W. Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, June Lang, William Janney, Vernon Steele, Anne Gray, James Finlayson, Daphne Pollard, Mary Gordon, David Torrence, Lionel Belmore, Maurice Black, May Beatty, Bobby Dunn, Charlie Hall, Brandon Hurst, Olaf Hytten, Claude King, Margaret Mann, Dick Wessel, Major Sam Harris. BONNIE SCOTLAND is somewhat of an exercise in frustration. After the classic THE DEVIL'S BROTHER, it is the longest of Laurel and Hardy's American feature films and, unlike the Auber operetta, it too often feels like it. The boys are herein saddled with a most uninteresting - and poorly acted - subplot featuring Ms. Lang and Mr. Janney as lovebirds separated by military proprieties. That said, when you strip away the two reels of footage exclusive to the love story, you are left with a very satisfying hour in which Stan and Ollie travel to Scotland to claim Stanley's inheritance. Of course, their expectations are much higher than their realization and it isn't long before the boys find themselves enlisted in the British army. There are several clever set-pieces, two of the best of which are set to music and involve Sgt. Finlayson. After an eight reel build-up, the film ends rather abruptly and with a gag first used in Laurel and Hardy's silent army short WITH LOVE AND HISSES. By the way, the rather cranky landlady is played by the venerable Mary Gordon, who a few years later would sign on as the more kindly and patient landlady Mrs. Hudson in the Basil Rathbone-Nigel Bruce SHERLOCK HOLMES pictures.

Next Meeting: Sunday, July 10th, 2011



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - JULY 10, 2011



LIBERTY

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Tom Kennedy, Sam Lufkin, James Finlayson, Harry Bernard. One of the iconic Laurel and Hardy shorts has the Boys as escaped convicts doing their best to keep one step ahead of the cops. Unfortunately, those steps take them to higher elevation than they could possibly have dreamed! And, yes, director Leo McCarey is the same chap who went on to direct GOING MY WAY.

MOVIE STAR MICKEY

1933 Walt Disney-United Artists One reel Directed by Burt Gillette. This classic Disney toon was originally released theatrically as MICKEY'S GALA PREMIER. Our Hollywood Film Enterprises print is slightly and shrewdly edited but still features a galaxy of celebrities in animated form. Look for Wallace Beery, Chaplin, Harold Lloyd, Keaton, the three Barrymores, George Arliss, some chuckling movie monsters and, of course, Laurel and Hardy.

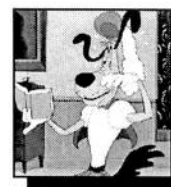


WHAT PRICE TAXI?

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Del Lord. With Clyde Cook, Billy Gilbert, Franklin Pangborn, Geneva Mitchell, Bud Jamison. This is the first of the Hal Roach "Taxi Boys" shorts. One of the more bizarre series with cast members coming and going. Del Lord had been directing at Mack Sennett and, in fact, had done several "Taxi" shorts for the King of Comedy. Lord brought the idea for the series to Roach and did several entries before moving to Columbia and finding everlasting fame directing the Three Stooges.

HAM IN A ROLE

1949 Warner Bros. One Reel Directed by Robert McKimson. With the voice talents of Mel Blanc and Stan Freberg. A Hilarious Looney Tune with a dog actor fed up with Termite Terrace Schtick and trying to get back to his first love - Shakespeare. However, the Goofy Gophers have other ideas!!



THE CHIMP

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Tiny Sandford, Billy Gilbert, William J. O'Brien, Bobby Burns, Martha Sleeper, Charles Gemora. One from the golden era. Stan and Ollie work in a run-down circus and ultimately are responsible for the show's closing. Since the owner can't pay off, he gives each member part of the show. Stan gets the Flea Circus. Ollie gets Ethel the Human Chimpanzee. Somehow the Lion also gets loose so the boys have their work cut out for them - in finding a place to sleep! Charles Gemora, who plays Ethel the Chimp, owned the gorilla costume and made a long career out of playing apes and chimps on the screen.



Next Meeting: Sunday, August 7th, 2011



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - AUGUST 7, 2011

JASPER S MINSTRELS

1944 George Pal - Paramount One Reel Directed by George Pal. Featuring the voice of Roy Glenn as the Scarecrow. This is a dazzling George Pal Puppetoon, a musical spectacular showcasing the golden era of blackface minstrels. Wildly politically incorrect today, the short gives a pretty good idea of the splash and pizzazz that went into the more elaborate minstrel shows.



MIDSUMMER MUSH

1933 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Chase. With Charley Chase, Betty Mack, Eddie Baker, Marvin Hatley. A delightful Chase entry with Charley as a Scoutmaster who takes his troop on a camping trip. Chase had done quite a bit of directing during the silent days but none between 1924 and 1932. Beginning in 1933, he contracted to act as well as direct for Roach; when he moved to Columbia in 1937 he similarly worked in front of and behind the camera.



SAPS AT SEA

1940 Hal Roach-United Artists 57 minutes Directed by Gordon Douglas. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Richard Cramer, James Finlayson, Harry Bernard, Eddie Conrad, Mary Gordon, Bob McKenzie, Harry Hayden, Gene Morgan, Patsy O'Byrne, Charlie Hall, Patsy Moran, Ed Brady, Eddie Borden, Sam Lufkin, and Ben Turpin. SAPS AT SEA marked the end of Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy's association with Hal Roach Studios. Stan had been with Roach since 1923 and Ollie since 1924. This 1940 feature is a happy send-off. Many of their stock players are in the film, though sadly Harry Bernard ("well, aren't you gonna split it?") died during filming and one of his scenes was done by a look-alike. One of the real high marks about SAPS is the performance of Dick Cramer as Nick Granger ("Old Nick"). Cramer was always a good nasty, but here he is positively scurrilous. His byplay with the Boys is a joyous thing to behold. Unlike their previous film A CHUMP AT OXFORD, SAPS AT SEA was not alternately issued as a streamliner but only as a six-reel feature film. On another sad note, Ben Turpin, who makes a cameo appearance, died two months after SAPS AT SEA was released. As for Stan and Ollie, they would be back on the boat 10 years later in ATOLL K, with a trip through Fox and Lion country in between.....



A Thousand Thanks to the Augustine Family for Hosting Our
Pot Luck Picnic Pool Party!!

Next Meeting: Sunday, September 11th, 2011

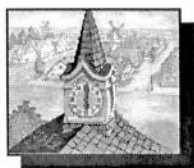


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - SEPTEMBER 11, 2011

THEIR PURPLE MOMENT

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Anita Garvin, Kay Deslys, Fay Holderness, Lyle Tayo, Tiny Sandford, Leo Willis, Jimmy Aubrey, Sam Lufkin, Gene Morgan, Patsy O'Byrne. A silent short from the domestic shelf of the L&H canon features Stan and Ollie ditching their wives and hooking up with a couple of flappers. This scenario was partially reworked into the Boys' 1936 feature OUR RELATIONS.

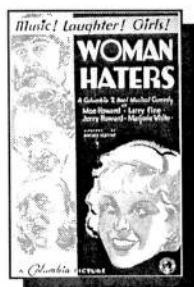


LITTLE DUTCH MILL

1934 Max Fleischer - Paramount One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. Featuring the voices of Bill Pennell and Mae Questel. A rare Cinecolor short all about a despicable miser who terrorizes the kiddies in a little Dutch village.

THE PAPERHANGER'S HELPER

1925 Billy West - Arrow Film Corp. One Reel (edited) Directed by Ward Hayes. With Oliver Hardy, Bobby Ray, Hazel Newman, Harry McCoy. This is actually a one-reel adaptation of a two-reel comedy originally titled STICK AROUND, produced by Chaplin imitator Billy West and starring Wests' often co-star Oliver Hardy. Hardy is paired with comic Bobby Ray. Ray made quite a few pictures in the 'teens, came back in the mid-twenties and quit acting with the advent of talkies. He worked for nearly 30 years as an assistant director. Most striking about this picture is the foreshadowing of Babe Hardy's eventual teaming with Stan Laurel. Hardy and Ray would appear together in a few shorts. THE PAPERHANGER'S HELPER was a favorite headline short (along with L&H's WITH LOVE AND HISSES) in the Midget Movies Machines at Rye Playland back in the 60's!



WOMAN HATERS

1934 Columbia Pictures Two Reels Directed by Archie Gottler. With Moe Howard, Larry Fine, Jerry Howard, Marjorie White, Monte Collins, Bud Jamison, Walter Brennan, George Gray, Jack Norton, Charles Richman, Tiny Sandford, Fred "Snowflake" Toons. Ted Healy's Stooges had been making shorts for a year at MGM when Healy decided to go solo and Moe, Larry and Curly signed on with Columbia. This was their first short, actually part of the studio's "Musical Novelties" series as evidenced by the entire film being performed in song and rhyming couplets, a style employed in the previous year's feature film HALLELUJAH, I'M A BUM with Al Jolson. Two years after appearing as a train conductor in WOMAN HATERS, Walter Brennan would win an Academy Award as Best Supporting Actor for his role in Samuel Goldwyn's COME AND GET IT.

BLOTTO

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Anita Garvin, Frank Holliday, Baldwin Cooke, Jean DeBriac, Charlie Hall, Tiny Sandford. Well, we're back where we started - in a nightclub. At least that's where we eventually wind up in this bona fide Laurel and Hardy classic. Ollie gets married buddy Stan to skip out on his wife so they can go clubbing. Stan's got a "bottle". Mrs. Laurel overhears the plan and decides to fix the boys' wagon. This short provided some material years later for Jackie Gleason and Art Carney in THE HONEYMOONERS. BLOTTO was reissued in 1937 with a new incidental musical score added. All extant prints are of the reissue version.



Next Meeting: Sunday, October 16th, 2011



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - OCTOBER 16, 2011

The Live Ghost

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Walter Long, Arthur Housman, Mae Busch, Charlie Hall, Leo Willis, Harry Bernard, Baldwin Cooke, Dick Gilbert. In honor of Halloween, we've brought back a favorite fright-fest. Stan and Ollie are hired by Captain Long to help shanghai a crew. Instead of getting paid, they're dumped into the hole with the unwilling sailors. Turns out Long is piloting a supposed ghost ship.

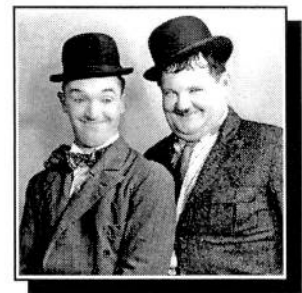


THE SODA SQUIRT

1933 P.A. Powers - MGM One Reel Directed by Ub Iwerks. Here is the irrespressible Flip the Frog, once again skirting the rim of the censor's boundaries as he celebrates the grand opening of his soda shop. Among the many celebrities who belly up to the counter are Jimmy Durante, Joe E. Brown and, of course, Laurel and Hardy.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF COMEDY

1957 Robert Youngson-20th Century-Fox 79 minutes Directed by Robert Youngson. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Bevan, Andy Clyde, Charley Chase, Carole Lombard, Will Rogers, Harry Langdon, Harry Gribbon, Jean Harlow, Al St. John, Ford Sterling, Ben Turpin. Narrated by Dwight Weist and Ward Wilson. Well, you might say that this is one of the most important motion pictures ever made. Due to the unprecedented and unanticipated success of this picture, worldwide audiences were once again given a chance to enjoy the hilarious antics of the great silent clowns, and in a theatrical environment. This picture ushered in the complete rediscovery of the silent era and, in doing so, earned 2 Academy Awards and 6 Oscar nominations. It was after the release of this picture that Blackhawk Films licensed the Hal Roach library and began selling 16mm prints, eventually issuing them in 8mm as well. THE GOLDEN AGE OF COMEDY was such a success that Youngson followed it up with a superior successor, WHEN COMEDY WAS KING. Eventually, he would produce THE DAYS OF THRILLS AND LAUGHTER, 30 YEARS OF FUN, LAUREL AND HARDY'S LAUGHING 20's, THE FURTHER PERILS OF LAUREL AND HARDY, FOUR CLOWNS, and MGM'S BIG PARADE OF COMEDY. We will be showing several of these great features in the coming seasons at Them Thar Hills. These days, with YouTube and DVD's, audiences are often jaded when it comes to excerpts or clip shows. But when THE GOLDEN AGE OF COMEDY was released, the gems therein were a revelation. So sit back and put yourself back in 1957. Elvis was King, the Screen was Big and Wide, and Father Knew Best when it came to TV. Look, listen and laugh at the flickering shadows from days gone by.



Next Meeting: Sunday, November 6th, 2011

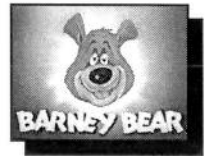


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 5, 2011

THE ROOKIE BEAR

1941 MGM One Reel Directed by Rudolf Ising. This is one of the earliest of MGM's Barney Bear cartoons. The character was originally designed as a Wallace Beery take-off and the series ran from 1939 to 1945. Then, in 1948, the character was revived in a slightly more streamlined design and appeared for another six years until 1954. This is vintage Barney, however, and the animation is particularly fluid and detailed.



THE MISFIT

1924 Lou Anger Productions-Educational Films Reissued by Hal Roach-Pathé One Reel Directed by Albert Austin. With Clyde Cook, Blanche Payson, Joe Roberts. Here's a rare one. Produced independently, later picked up (along with Cook himself) by Hal Roach, THE MISFIT is an early army comedy and one of the earliest film versions of the popular vaudeville "Drill Routine". Cook's wife is played by the wonderful Blanche Payson, who appeared in many Hal Roach comedies including the Boys' OUR WIFE, HELPMATES, BELOW ZERO and more. The Drill Sergeant is played by Joe Roberts, a favorite foil for Buster Keaton.

PRIVATE SNAFU: SPIES!

1943 Leon Schlesinger-US Gov't Half-Reel Directed by Charles M. Jones. Written by Chuck Jones and Dr. Seuss, the Private Snafu cartoons were a series of shorts produced exclusively for members of the U.S. armed forces and, in comic form, taught about loose lips, loose women, and other urgent topics.



GREAT GUNS

1941 20th Century-Fox 74 minutes Directed by Monty Banks. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Sheila Ryan, Dick Nelson, Edmund MacDonald, Charles Trowbridge, Ludwig Stossel, Kane Richmond, Mae Marsh, Ethel Griffies, Paul Harvey, Charles Arnt, Pierre Watkin, Russell Hicks, Irving Bacon, Billy Benedict, James Flavin, William Forrest, Harold Goodwin, Bud Geary, Leroy Mason, Walter Sande, Max Wagner, Dave Willock, Billy Wayne. GREAT GUNS was the first film Stan and Babe made under their new contract with 20th Century-Fox and was one of many army comedies churned out by the studios in peacetime 1941 beginning with Universal's BUCK PRIVATES, released in January. Working in the Sol Wurtzel unit ("things have gone from bad to Wurtzel!"), the atmosphere was considerably more formal and departmentalized than at the familial Roach studio. Written by staff writer Lou Breslow, GREAT GUNS is a pretty standard army comedy with a few burlesque chestnuts thrown in masquerading as Laurel and Hardy routines. Fortunately, the Boys are eager to please in their first new big studio production and they are in top form, benefitting too from the direction of former silent daredevil comedian Monty Banks (you'll see him in an amazing railroad chase in DAYS OF THRILLS AND LAUGHTER next season). The cast is

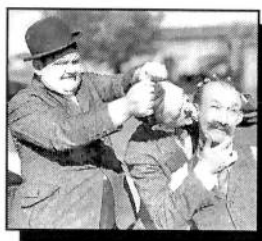
filled with familiar faces but, alas, none of the Roach boys and girls. All in all, it's a painless and instructive hour-and-a-quarter and, more importantly, it was a morale booster for the many thousands of young men affected by the recently-passed Selective Training and Service Act. Just two short months after the picture's release America would be at war and comedians like Laurel and Hardy, Bob Hope, Abbott and Costello and many others would be needed more than ever to keep our spirits up during the Country's greatest crisis.

Next Meeting: Sunday, December 4th, 2011



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - DECEMBER 4, 2011



BIG BUSINESS

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James W. Horne and Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Lyle Tayo, Tiny Sandford. This has been called by many the greatest two-reeler of all time. It is certainly, along with THE MUSIC BOX, the most famous Laurel and Hardy film. Selling Christmas trees in California, the Boys meet with sales resistance at almost every turn. But there comes a point when even resistance must be met with resistance!

FRESH HARE

1942 Leon Schlesinger-Warner Bros. One reel Directed by Isadore Freleng. One of the early Bugs vs. Elmer cartoons, this one features Sgt. Fudd of the Canadian Mounties. Friz Freleng loved injecting music into his cartoons and this short features a particularly bizarre song finale!



THE FATAL GLASS OF BEER

1933 Mack Sennett - Paramount Two Reels Directed by Clyde Bruckman. With W. C. Fields, Rychard Cramer, George Chandler, Rosemary Theby, George Moran. One of the Great Man's most enjoyable shorts - one of four he made for Mack Sennett from 1932-1933 - is a sendup of the old "mellerdramas". Dick "Big Nick" Cramer plays a softy this time as he listens to Fields serenade him on the zither. As in Laurel & Hardy's COUNTY HOSPITAL, there is some rear projection work that is done for obviously unrealistic effect!

SKI FOR TWO

1944 Walter Lantz-Universal. One Reel Directed by James Culhane. Woody Woodpecker went through several radical design changes over the years. In this one, his buck teeth are gone and he's not quite as looney as in his previous shorts. Wally Walrus makes a good foil for the bird as Woody tries to chisel a stay - and a meal - at Wally's ski lodge.



LAUGHING GRAVY

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James W. Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlie Hall, Harry Bernard. A talkie remake of ANGORA LOVE, this short was originally shot as a three-reeler. However, it was decided that the third reel was anticlimactic with a level of pathos that seemed out-of-place with some of the outrageous slapstick that preceded it. The third reel was included in the foreign versions of the short and even the American version has been restored to some versions as an alternate cut. This, however, is the version released to theaters in April of 1931.

Next Meeting: Sunday, March 4th, 2012



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - MARCH 4, 2012

BE BIG?

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott and James W. Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Anita Garvin, Isabelle Keith, Harry Earles, Charlie Hall, Chet Brandenburg, Baldwin Cooke, Jean de Briac. If ever Laurel and Hardy could have been accused of milking a gag to the extreme, this short might provide the evidence. The Boys try to put yet another one over the wives, this time to attend a stag dinner. At least one of their obstacles is a pair of very stubborn boots.



HOP, A SKIP AND A CHUMP

1942 Leon Schlesinger-Warner Bros. One Reel Directed by Isadore Freleng. Voices by Mel Blanc. Every cartoon studio, at one point or another, did their own takeoff of Laurel and Hardy. This was the gang at Termite Terrace's attempt at adapting Stan and Ollie to animated characters - in this case as birds in pursuit of a grasshopper.

HIGH AND DIZZY

1920 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by Hal Roach. With Harold Lloyd, Mildred Davis, Roy Brooks, Wallace Howe, William Gillespie, Noah Young. By special request, we're bringing back a comedy classic. This is one of the dozens of two-reelers Harold Lloyd was making for Hal Roach each year during the late teens and early 1920's. By 1920 Lloyd had abandoned his "Lonesome Luke" character and was now being known simply as "the boy". He was making the most of his acrobatic prowess, which would be immortalized in his 1923 feature SAFETY LAST. The soundtrack, featuring performances by the Paragon Orchestra, was produced by Chelsea Rialto Studios.



HI, NEIGHBOR!

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Gus Meins. With Spanky McFarland, Wally Albright, Jerry Tucker, Stymie Beard, Scotty Beckett, Jackie Taylor, Tommy Bond, Harry Bernard, Charlie Hall, Ernie Alexander, Tiny Sandford. This is one of Our Gang's all-time favorite shorts. A snooty rich kid moves into the 'hood and Wally's girl is totally wowed by his foot-powered fire engine. Not to be outdone, the Gang decides to get their own set of wheels!

THICKER THAN WATER

1935 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James W. Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Daphne Pollard, James Finlayson, Harry Bowen, Charlie Hall, Grace Goodall, Allan Cavan, Gladys Gale, Bess Flowers, Lester Dorr. Well, we'll wrap up our season opener with Laurel and Hardy's final two-reeler. It's a neat mixture of wordplay and slapstick with swell support from Ms. Pollard as Stanley's wife, a role she repeated the following year in the feature OUR RELATIONS. Once again, Stanley has an idea and Ollie - one wonders why he hasn't learned by now - listens to him. THICKER THAN WATER was no cheap exit from the shorts contract. They spent some extra money on this one and came up with a winner. BTW, the auction sequence was revived in Laurel and Hardy's Fox feature THE DANCING MASTERS.



Next Meeting: Sunday, April 1st, 2012

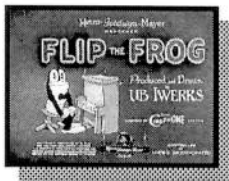


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - APRIL 1, 2012

ONE GOOD TURN

1931 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mary Carr, James Finlayson, Billy Gilbert. One of the best of the Boys' "ragamuffins" shorts, wherein Stan and Ollie are victims of the Depression. They go begging for food from a sweet old lady and, in an attempt to repay her kindness, try to extricate her from the evil clutches of the fiend who holds the mortgage on her house. Trouble is, the mortgage business is all part of a mellerdrama being rehearsed for the community players. This is an especially enjoyable romp as Stan takes the rare opportunity to turn the tables on Ollie in an especially violent manner!



THE OFFICE BOY

1932 Celebrity Productions-MGM One Reel Directed by Ub Iwerks.

Here's another cartoon starring the somewhat subversive Flip the Frog. Flip is job hunting and steps into an office. He's immediately taken with the pretty secretary. He then asks entry to the office marked "Private". Boy, does he get a surprise! Flip's shorts are a strange bunch, and they are certainly relics of an era.

HIPS! HIPS! HOORAY!

1934 RKO Radio Pictures 68 minutes Directed by Mark Sandrich. With Bert Wheeler, Robert Woolsey, Ruth Etting, Thelma Todd, Dorothy Lee, George Meeker, Phyllis Barry, Matt Briggs, Spencer Charters, Stanley Blystone, Nat Carr, Marion Byron, Elise Cavanna, Otto Fries, Dorothy Granger, Lee Shumway, Bobby Watson.

For our April Fools Guest Star feature, we're presenting the OTHER preeminent comedy duo of the 30's, Wheeler and Woolsey. Unlike most comedy teams, Bert Wheeler and Bob Woolsey did not have an "act". They did not travel the rails from one vaudeville house to another, but were initially teamed in the 1927 Broadway extravaganza RIO RITA, produced by Florenz Ziegfeld. Woolsey had been on Broadway since 1919 and Wheeler since 1923 (in another Ziegfeld show). When RIO RITA was bought by RKO, Wheeler and Woolsey went west in 1929 to co-star in the picture version with Bebe Daniels and John Boles. This was followed by more Broadway-style top-heavy musicals such as DIXIANA and THE CUCKOOS. However, audiences quickly grew tired of these stagebound elephants and RKO began to use Bert and Bob to better advantage in more economical comedies. Their humor was especially risqué and HIPS HIPS HOORAY is perhaps the zenith of the pair's pre-code vehicles. Wheeler and Woolsey continued making features for RKO through 1938 when Robert Woolsey died of a liver ailment. Wheeler left Hollywood and went back to the legitimate theater. He later re-partnered with his RKO sweetheart Dorothy Lee for nightclub and vaudeville work. Wheeler made some early television appearances in his musical comedy guise and later made several comic and dramatic appearances on several series. He passed away in 1968. There is a striking painting of Bert Wheeler hanging in the Lambs Club on West 51st Street.



Next Meeting: Sunday, May 6th, 2012



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - MAY 6, 2012

SLIPPING WIVES

1927 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels Directed by Fred Guiol. With Priscilla Dean, Herbert Rawlinson, Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Albert Conti. This was only the fourth film in which both Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy appeared (including 1917's LUCKY DOG). They were still many reels away from being paired into the most famous comedy team of all time. SLIPPING WIVES is one of many marital mix-up shorts that Roach produced in the late 1920's. Priscilla and Herbert have drifted apart, so she decides to make him jealous. Sound familiar? It probably was even in 1927.



CINDERELLA MEETS FELLA

1938 Leon Schlesinger-Warner Bros. One Reel Directed by Fred Avery. Voices by Danny Webb, Bernice Hansen and Mel Blanc. This is a classic Tex Avery cartoon from his Termite Terrace period. It takes place in enchanted times but there are plenty of modern-day gags. Biggest gag of all is the prince - the ubiquitous Egghead. Egghead eventually morphed into Elmer Fudd, but he was never quite as bizarre - or funny - as he is in his original Joe Penner-inspired incarnation.

HELPMATES

1932 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Blanche Payson, Bobby Callahan, Robert "Bobby" Burns. One of the immortal Laurel and Hardy shorts. I can't believe it's taken four seasons to get to it! Ollie is recovering from having thrown a wild party when he gets word that "the wife" is expected home unexpectedly! Ollie gets Stan to come over and help clean things up. That's really all you need to know. Except to say that this is yet another example of the simplest of ideas being developed to the hilt and garnished with snappy ginger. Lots of wit, surprise, anticipation and, eventually, pity (we wouldn't dare suggest pathos!).



THE BALOONATIC

1923 Joe Schenck-First National Two Reels Directed by Eddie Cline and Buster Keaton. With Buster Keaton, Phyllis Haver, and Babe London. This Keaton comedy could have been excerpted as "Canoe Cutups" as the Great Stone Face spends more time paddling than he does floating. Buster escapes from an amusement park by hijacking a balloon. Before you know it, he's in the mountains with lovely Phyllis Haver, fording one stream after another to impress her. Director Cline could get laughs from a cigar store indian and his association with Keaton resulted in some of the greatest two-reelers of all time.

DIRTY WORK

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Lucien Littlefield, Sam Adams. This is one of the Boys' "at work" pictures, in which Stan and Ollie pretend at various professions and profess variable skills thereto! Here they are chimney sweeps. Now, if ever there were the potential for a mess to occur, this is it. However, things are further complicated by the fact that the chimney they are cleaning belongs to a mad (he really is quite looney!) scientist. This short also has one of Laurel and Hardy's occasional "weird" endings, which have included being skinned alive, having their legs tied around their necks, being stretched and squashed beyond recognition and today's finale, which we won't give away. Sam Adams, who plays Jessup the butler, had a similar role in the Our Gang classic WASHEE IRONEE.



Next Meeting: Sunday, June 3rd, 2012

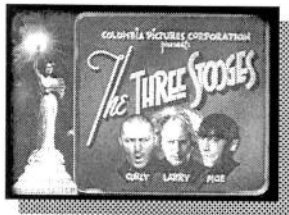


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - JUNE 3, 2012

BULLDOZING THE BULL

1938 Max Fleischer - Paramount One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of Jack Mercer and Margie Hines. We begin our Mexican Madness Month show with a classic Popeye cartoon from Fleischer studios. Popeye was always kind to "aminals" and he was certainly not about to be accused of abusing a poor bull. But sometimes aggression, though unwanted, is unavoidable!

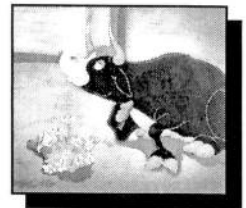


WHAT'S THE MATADOR?

1942 Columbia Two Reels Directed by Jules White. With Moe Howard, Larry Fine, Curly Howard, Suzanne Kaaren, Harry Burns, Dorothy Appleby, Eddie Laughton, Cy Schindell, John Tyrrell, Bert Young, Don Zelaya. One of the Stooges most popular shorts has them heading south of the border ("Mexico here we come, yeah!") to do their vaudeville act. Unfortunately, they run up against a jealous husband who winds up pulling a deadly switch on them in the bull ring. This short was remade with Joe Besser as SAPPY BULLFIGHTERS, in which skinflint Jules White didn't even BOTHER with a process screen for the runaway bull sequence.

FERDINAND THE BULL

1938 Walt Disney - RKO Radio One Reel Directed by Dick Rickard. With the voices of Don Wilson and Milt Kahl. Based on the fable by Munro Leaf, FERDIAND THE BULL is one of Walt Disney's simplest and most endearing parables. From Don Wilson's jocular narration to the outstanding animation and character design (the matador and his retinue are caricatures of Uncle Walt and the Disney animators), the cartoon is sheer sublime delight. This was the Academy Award winner for Best Cartoon Short Subject.



THE BULLFIGHTERS



1945 20th Century-Fox 61 minutes Directed by Mal St. Clair. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Margo Woode, Carol Andrews, Richard Lane, Ralph Sanford, Diosa Costello, Rory Calhoun, Ed Gargan, Gus Glassmire, Jay Novello, Cyril Ring, Julian Rivero, Emmett Vogan, Max Wagner, Hank Worden. For our final Bull session, we present Stan and Ollie's final American film appearance and their next-to-last feature film. THE BULLFIGHTERS is probably the most popular of the team's Fox features and one of the best-remembered from tv airings in the 1960's. One of the comic centerpieces of the picture - the "spat" with Margo Woode - is a reenactment of an earlier encounter with another Latin firebrand - Lupe Velez - in 1934's HOLLYWOOD PARTY. And Stan himself had earlier donned a matador's costume for his 1922 satire MUD AND SAND (in which he played "Rhubarb Vaselino!"). One of the interesting aspects of the Fox features is seeing the Boys interact with more polished and savvy supporting players. Jimmy Finlayson, Charlie Hall and Dick Cramer have been replaced by Ed Gargan, Richard Lane and Ralph Sanford. And next to these "wiseacres" Laurel and Hardy seem patently stupid and without the more refined character shadings of earlier days.

Next Meeting: Sunday, July 1st, 2012



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - JULY 1, 2012

THEY GO BOOM! 1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels

Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlie Hall. This is one of the earliest of the Boys' talking short comedies. Simple in plot and setting, but grandiose in many of the gags devised by Leo McCarey and company. After you see this, go out and have your throat painted!

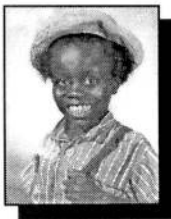
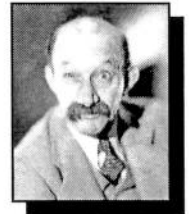


TOONERVILLE TROLLEY

1936 Van Beuren-RKO One Reel Directed by Burt Gillette and Tom Palmer. One of the most beloved comic strips of the early 20th Century was The Toonerville Folks. In 1936, creator Fontaine Fox and producer Amadee Van Beuren brought the Old Skipper, Katrinka and the rattle trap Trolley to the screen in this delightful Technicolor cartoon.

SHOULD HUSBANDS PAY?

1926 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels Directed by L. Richard Jones and Stan Laurel. With James Finlayson, Tyler Brooke, Charlotte Mineau, Martha Sleeper, Vivien Oakland, Anders Randolph, Tiny Sandford, Anita Garvin, Kay Deslys, Lyle Tayo. A flea-market discovery of the complete two-reel version of this hilarious Roach silent classic. Filandering Brooke is kept on a short leash by his lawyer Finn. A little bit of chivalry goes terribly wrong. With a soundtrack produced by Chelsea Rialto Studios.



TWO TOO YOUNG 1936 Hal Roach-MGM One Reel Directed by Gordon Douglas. With Spanky McFarland, Alfalfa Switzer, Buckwheat Thomas, Porky Lee, Sidney Kilbrick, Rosina Lawrence. One of the later Hal Roach Our Gang shorts just in time for Independence Day. Porky and Buckwheat bring firecrackers to school but Spanky decides they're too little to play with them. They might get hurt! If this were one of the later MGM-produced shorts there would be a sappy lesson to be learned. Fortunately, the Roach team went for laughs!

Any Old Port

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James W. Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Walter Long, Julie Bishop, Robert Burns, Harry Bernard, Dick Gilbert, Eddie Baker, Charlie Hall. Former D. W. Griffith heavy Walter Long was one of Stan and Ollie's greatest foils. Here he is the despicable owner of a run-down seaman's hotel and he decides to marry a poor scrub girl. The Boys take a hand in helping her but their victory is short-lived as they are re-acquainted with "Mugsie Long" in the boxing ring. ANY OLD PORT was released one year after Chaplin's masterpiece CITY LIGHTS, which also featured a comic boxing sequence. But with all the chasing, fighting, boxing going on, the delight in this picture is watching Ollie order a slight repast at a beanery-on-wheels.



Next Meeting: Sunday, August 12th, 2012



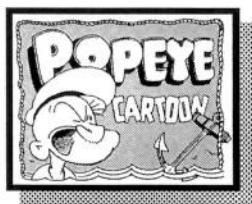
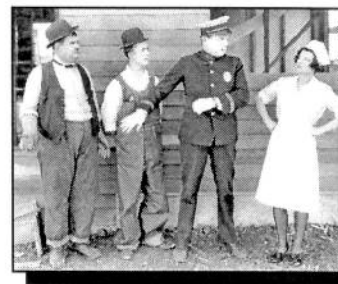
THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - AUGUST 12TH, 2012

THE FINISHING TOUCH

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels

Directed by Clyde Bruckman and Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, Dorothy Coburn, Sam Lufkin. This is one of the Boys' best silents and the first short featuring them in their coverall work clothes. Here they are house builders, erecting a domicile right next door to a hospital that requires Q-U-I-E-T!! When one of the nurses complains about the noise, Officer Kennedy investigates.



ADVENTURES OF POPEYE

1935 Max Fleischer - Paramount One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voice talents of Jack Mercer, Mae Questel, Gus Wickie. A compilation cartoon rehashing some early footage but framed ingeniously. A real-life little boy has troubles with the neighborhood bully. Popping out of a comicbook, the musclebound mariner displays his penchant for spinach and demonstrates its bodybuilding effectiveness by showing some scenes of past altercations in which the iron-filled leaves gave him vig, vigor and vitality.

BLOCK-HEADS

1938 Hal Roach-MGM Directed by John G. Blystone.

Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Minna Gombell, Patrica Ellis, Billy Gilbert, James Finlayson, Patsy Moran, Henry Hall, Sam Lufkin, William Royle, James C. Morton, Harry Woods, Tommy Bond, Jean Del Val. Once again, the boys are in uniform for Uncle Sam. At the tail end of the Great War, Stan is ordered to remain at his post in the trenches "until relieved from duty". Need we say more?? This film is an expanded remake of the Boys' first talking picture, UNACCUSTOMED AS WE ARE. It would be the last film in which they would co-star with the great Billy Gilbert. Sam Lufkin, who played the hapless homeowner in THE FINISHING TOUCH, returns here with his best-remembered line: "Come on lug, get outta that chair!" Structurally, the film is unique in that, after the first reel, the remainder of the film takes place in one time period. Not so uncommon for short, but rare for a feature-length picture. BLOCK-HEADS also boasts a wonderful original score by Marvin Hatley and it is the second Laurel & Hardy feature to be nominated for an Academy Award for Best Musical Score. The previous nominee was WAY OUT WEST, also by Hatley. One of the screenwriters of BLOCK-HEADS, Felix Adler, had in the script an entirely different ending for the picture involving big game hunter Billy Gilbert's trophy wall. However, Hal Roach thought the idea too gruesome and Adler subsequently used it as the finale of a Three Stooges short, I'LL NEVER HEIL AGAIN.



Next Meeting: Sunday, September 9th, 2012

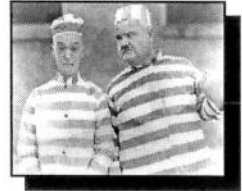


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - SEPTEMBER 9TH, 2012

THE SECOND 100 YEARS

1927 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Fred Guiol. Written by H.M. Walker and Leo McCarey. Photographed by George Stevens. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlie Hall, James Finlayson, Otto Fries, Frank Brownlee, Dorothy Coburn, Elinor Vanderveer, Bob O'Connor, Edgar Dearing, Eugene Pallette. This was the first Laurel & Hardy short released by MGM and was, in fact, the first short advertised as a "Laurel and Hardy" comedy. The boys are convicts bent on busting out of stir. While their initial efforts seem to have paid off, they bite off more than they can chew and wind up sadder but wiser criminals.



THE SCREWY TRUANT

1945 Fred Quimby - MGM One Reel Directed by Tex Avery. With the voice talents of Wally Maher and Dick Wilson. Let's get it right out - Louis B. Mayer HATED Screwy Squirrel. He hated him so much that he fired the actor, radio star Wally Maher, who voiced him and demanded that Tex Avery "kill off" the little rodent. Which he did. But not in this short. Fear not, Screwy will live to torment L.B. for yet another day.

ONE A.M.

1916 Charles Chaplin-Lone Star Film Corp. Two Reels Directed by Charles Chaplin. Reissued by Van Beuren-RKO Radio Pictures. Music by Gene Rodemich. With Charlie Chaplin, Albert Austin. Here's a classic two reeler with a single, simple premise. It's one a.m. and Charlie has been out drinking. He comes home three sheets to the wind and has to get himself upstairs and between the sheets. Simplicity personified. And brilliantly executed. NOTE: The print you are seeing is a Blackhawk release of the 1932 RKO reissue with synchronous music and effects. The official video releases of the Chaplin shorts have removed these wonderful scores and replaced them with electronic soundtracks. More's the pity.



OFF THE HORSES

1937 E.W. Hammons - 20th Century-Fox Two Reels Produced by Al Christie. Directed by William Watson. With Bert Lahr, Mildred Schroeder, Russ Brown and Robert Shayne. Very few folks today get a chance to see the great vaudeville star Bert Lahr in anything except THE WIZARD OF OZ. This is one of his early film shorts, shot in New York for the Al Christie Company. The young rival is Robert Shayne, later known as Inspector Henderson on the SUPERMAN tv show; and the race track tout is played by New York actor Russ Brown, who later managed the Washington Senators in the Broadway and film versions of DAMN YANKEES.

COME CLEAN

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James W. Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Gertrude Astor, Linda Loredó, Charlie Hall and the Ever-Popular Mae Busch. Here's a Laurel & Hardy fan favorite. Maybe not loved by the critics, but it's loaded with great gags and favorite lines that Sons have been quoting for years. The Boys get sucked into a blackmail plot and try to keep a vamp from spilling all to their wives. All this because Stanley had to have a dish of ice cream! OH!



Next Meeting: Sunday, October 7th, 2012



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - OCTOBER 7TH, 2012

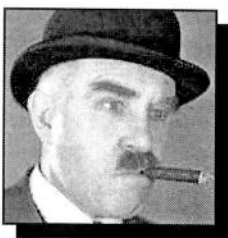
THE LAUREL-HARDY MURDER CASE

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott. Written by H.M. Walker. Photographed by George Stevens. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Fred Kelsey, Frank Austin, Del Henderson, Stanley Blystone, Bobby Burns, Rosa Gore, Dorothy Granger, Art Rowlands, Tiny Sandford.



Ever since THE CAT AND THE CANARY hit Broadway and, later, films, the "old dark house" was a favorite venue for thrillers and comedies alike. Actually, the genre probably dates back to George M. Cohan's venerable comedy chiller SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE. In any case, Laurel and Hardy decided to take their crack at creaking doors and secret passages in this 1930 three-reeler. Spotting a newspaper notice that Stan's uncle has passed away and left a fortune, the Boys decide to attend the reading of the will and see if nephew has any loose millions coming to him. Turns out the notice was a police trap to try and entice the murderer to return to the scene of the crime. And with that setup, we're in for a half hour of shrieks and howls with some hilarious word play thrown in for good measure. Heading the supporting cast of THE LAUREL-HARDY MURDER CASE is Fred Kelsey, a former silent movie director who spent his career in talkies playing every conceivable cop, detective, process-server, jailer, invariably topped with his trademark bowler hat and sporting a brush moustache under which hung a cheap cigar. Kelsey was so inseparable from this guise that animator Tex Avery played tribute to him with the starring role in WHO KILLED WHO?, which, of course, is on tonight's program.

There were several foreign-language versions of THE LAUREL-HARDY MURDER CASE, including German, French and Spanish. The Spanish version, "Noche de Duendes", incorporated most of the 1930 short BERTH MARKS into its running time for a virtual full-length feature. Here is the German title card, which translates to SPOOKS AT MIDNIGHT.



WHO KILLED WHO?

1943 Fred Quimby - MGM One Reel Directed by Tex Avery. With the voice talents of Billy Bletcher and Richard Haydn. Featuring an appearance by Robert Emmett O'Connor. Tex Avery's nod to the old dark house murder play features wraparounds hosted by familiar cop-actor Robert Emmett O'Connor and starring an animated version of character actor Fred Kelsey. As with most of Avery's MGM classics, the gags come fast and furious - too fast to notice whether or not they're funny (which they are!).



PRAIRIE CHICKENS

1943 Hal Roach-United Artists 48 minutes Music by Edward Ward. Directed by Hal Roach Jr. With Jimmy Rogers, Noah Beery Jr., Joe Sawyer, Marjorie Woodworth, Jack Norton, Dudley Dickerson, Raymond Hatton, Rosemary LaPlanche, Walter Baldwin, Hank Bell, Ethan Laidlaw, William Desmond, William Farnum, Frank Faylen, Si Jenks, Ed Gargan, Milton Kibbee, Mike Mazurki, Noel Neill, Glenn Strange, Ray Teal. Ever since Laurel and Hardy left Roach Studios in 1940, the producer was ever-trying to develop a replacement comedy team. He had William Bendix and Joe Sawyer as the updated Taxi Boys; William Tracy and Joe Sawyer in a series of Army comedies; and Jimmy Rogers (son of Will) and Noah Beery Jr (son of Noah Sr) as Jimmy and Pidge, two drifters that looked like they had spent time on the California ranch where George and Lennie had hung out in OF MICE AND MEN. In fact, Noah Beery Jr. WAS one of the ranch hands in that classic Roach production. Plenty of scare sequences to give our good friend and Stooges stalwart Dudley Dickerson a workout! PRAIRIE CHICKENS is also one of the earliest films of Noel Neill, best remembered as Lois Lane Number 2 on THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN.

Next Meeting: Sunday, November 4th, 2012

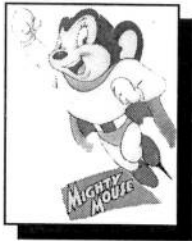


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 4TH, 2012

The Vagabond

1916 Lone Star-Mutual Two Reels Directed by Charles Chaplin. With Charlie Chaplin, Edna Purviance, Eric Campbell, Charlotte Mineau, Albert Austin, Lloyd Bacon, Henry Bergman, Leo White. One of the famous 12 Mutual shorts made by Chaplin between 1915 and 1917, THE VAGABOND has some early touches of Chaplin's trademark pathos. Charlie plays a musician who falls in love with a girl that has been kidnapped by Gypsies. A rescue is inevitable. Future great comedy director Lloyd Bacon plays an artist.



GYPSY LIFE

1945 Paul Terry-20th Century-Fox One Reel Directed by Connie Rosinski. Music by Philip Sheib. The Paul Terry Cartoons are certainly not considered in the same classic vein as the Warner Bros., Fleischer or even MGM animated classics. But there are individual entries that remain enjoyable to this day. The Mighty Mouse "Operetta" cartoons are some of the best. Aside from the great rodent's "Here I come to save the day", we usually have Oil Can Harry and Pearl Pureheart as the perennial villain and heroine who emote in high-class musical vernacular. In GYPSY LIFE, however, we have a Romany beauty instead of Blonde Pearl and a nasty ravenous "bat cat" in Harry's place.

The Bohemian Girl

1936 Hal Roach-MGM 70 minutes Music by Michael Balfe. Musical Direction by Nathaniel Shilkret. Directed by James W. Horne and Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Jacqueline Wells, Thelma Todd, Mae Busch, Antonio Moreno, Darla Hood, James Finlayson, William P. Carleton, Andrea Leeds, Harry Bernard, Harry Bowen, Bob O'Connor, Bobby Dunn, Eddie Borden, Zeffie Tilbury, Mitchell Lewis, James C. Morton, Sam Lufkin, Margaret Mann, Howard Hickman, Dick Gilbert, Lane Chandler.



THE BOHEMIAN GIRL is the third of Laurel and Hardy's starring comic operas (they played supporting roles in the mostly-lost ROGUE SONG) and, like FRA DIAVOLO and BABES IN TOYLAND which preceded it, this one features a justifiably famous score. Composed by Michael Balfe way back in 1843, THE BOHEMIAN GIRL featured a now-routine plot about a royal princess kidnapped by a band of roaming Gypsies. The score, featuring such beloved standards as "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls", "When Other Lips" and "That Grief May Call Its Own" is faithfully represented in the Hal Roach film production. A new song, written for Thelma Todd's character (her voice was dubbed), was "The Heart of a Gypsy" by musical director Nat Shilkret. This was Thelma Todd's last film and, in fact, the picture had to be completely re-written due to her untimely and suspicious death at age 29. The song she interprets on screen is the only footage Roach was able to use in the film. Jacqueline Wells, who plays the grown abductee, is seen singing "Marble Halls", but her voice was dubbed by Rosina Lawrence, who would later co-star with Stan and Ollie in WAY OUT WEST and was teacher Miss Lawrence in the Our Gang one-reel comedies. What THE BOHEMIAN GIRL lacks in a cohesive story it more than makes up for in comedy set-pieces. Laurel and Hardy are in top form and this feature contains some of their funniest sequences. Stan, in particular, shines in a solo bit where he has to bottle a barrel of new wine! The Gypsy who sings "When Other Lips" is Felix Knight, who played Tom-Tom in BABES IN TOYLAND. Hopefully you'll be on hand at the Shadowland December 1st for our screening of BABES.

Next Event: Saturday, December 1st at the Shadowland!



Thank you for
being part of the
**WAWARSING
WASSAIL!**



NYSCA

SHADOWLAND THEATRE

December 1st, 2012



PROGRAM

A Max Fleischer Color Classic
"Somewhere In Dreamland"

*

Hal Roach Presents
Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy
in

Victor Herbert's

BABES IN TOYLAND

with

Charlotte Henry Felix Knight

Henry Kleinbach

Florence Roberts William Burress Johnny Downs
Marie Wilson Kewpie Morgan John George
Virginia Karnes Angelo Rossito Ferdinand Munier
Billy Bletcher Gus Leonard Charley Rogers
Tiny Sandford Spec O'Donnell

Music by Victor Herbert

Book and Lyrics by Glen McDonough

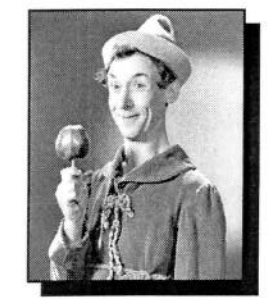
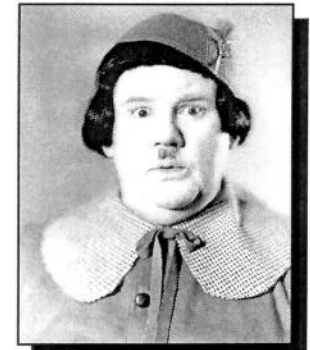
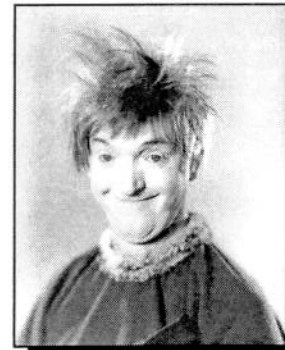
Screenplay by Frank Butler and Nick Grinde

Photographed by Art Lloyd and Francis Corby

Musical Direction by Harry Jackson

Directed by Gus Meins

and **Charles Rogers**



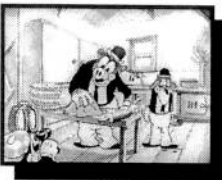
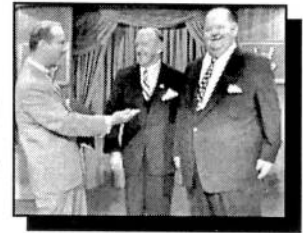


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - MARCH 3RD, 2013

THIS IS YOUR LIFE

1954 (December 1st) Ralph Edwards Productions - NBC 25 minutes Directed by Axel Gruenberg. With Ralph Edwards, Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Vivian Blaine, Leo McCarey, Lucille Hardy, Edith Laurel, Lois Laurel, Ben Shipman, Hal Roach Jr. Back in the days of live television, THIS IS YOUR LIFE really did surprise celebrities with remote cameras and such, dragging them on stage and submitting them to 30 minutes of a (hopefully welcome) trip down memory lane. After the delayed release of UTOPIA in the US earlier in 1954, viewers must have been relieved to see Stan looking hale and hearty again. As for Hardy being hale -well, he was certainly the biggest thing on television that night!



MOVIE MAD

1931 Celebrity Prod - MGM One Reel Directed by Ub Iwerks. One of the earliest animated cartoons to caricature and lampoon Hollywood stars. Stan and Ollie are depicted as a modern-day Simple Simon and Pie Man. The story is simple - Flip decides to become an actor and visits a local studio.

WRONG AGAIN

1929 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, William Gillespie, Harry Bernard, Charlie Hall, Josephine Crowell, Del Henderson, Anders Randolph, Fred Kelsey, Sam Lufkin.

One of the last of the silent Laurel and Hardy comedies features the pair as stableboys taking care of a horse named Blue Boy. When they overhear that a \$5,000 reward has been posted for the return of a stolen "Blue Boy" they naturally think it's the horse. So they set about to return the nag to its rightful owner...



THE FULLER GUSH MAN

1934 RKO Radio Pictures Two Reels Written and Directed by Al Boasberg. With Walter Catlett, Vivien Oakland, Lew Kelly, Zeffie Tilbury. Aside from the fact that this is a very funny short about a family trying to discourage their daughter's suitor by pretending to be wacky, THE FULLER GUSH MAN is unique in that the star opens the film by introducing the supporting cast and the entire crew prior to the main titles. Catlett was a very popular performer in features and he made sporadic appearances in shorts for RKO and Columbia. He was the voice of the Fox in Walt Disney's PINOCCHIO and sang the delightful song "Hi Diddle Dee Dee".

SCRAM?

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Raymond McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Vivien Oakland, Richard Cramer, Arthur Houseman, Charles MacMurphy, Wilson Bengie, Sam Lufkin. This is one of the great ones. Laurel and Hardy are vagrants given orders to clear the city limits (by a very, very nasty judge). A drunk repays their kindness on a rainy night and invites them home with him. Problem is, it's not his home that he staggers into. But the wife of the real master of the house is delighted to have company - until her husband returns home.....!



Next Meeting: Sunday, April 7th, 2013



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

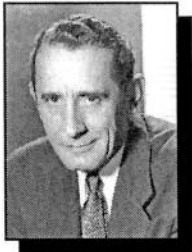
FILM PROGRAM - APRIL 7TH, 2013

THE MUSIC BOX

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert, Sam Lufkin, Charlie Hall, Gladys Gale, William Gillespie, Lilyan Irene. We last ran this gem back in 2009, so we think it's ripe for a revisit. THE MUSIC BOX is the only Laurel and Hardy film to win an Academy Award (Best Live Action Short Subject of 1932). Three-reelers are usually problematic but this one is paced perfectly, never allowing the audience to question its extra length. The scenario features a superb blend of verbal and visual gags, punctuated by the great Billy Gilbert's over-the-top portrayal of the unhappy recipient of the title item. For those of you who are just beginning to get familiar with some of the lower-tier players, you might note that Sam Lufkin, who plays the cop in this short, was the bullying veteran ("Come on lug, get outta that chair!") in BLOCK-HEADS. Lufkin appeared in scores of Hal Roach shorts, occasionally benign, but more often accosting the protagonists. He was also the unhappy homeowner whose new ediface crumbled when a bird landed on the chimney in THE FINISHING TOUCH. By the way, the tune played by 'the music box' at the opening of the picture is "The King's Men" by Noel Gay and Harry Graham.



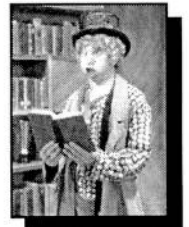
TUBBY THE TUBA



1947 George Pal - Paramount One Reel Directed by George Pal. Narrated by Victor Jory. TUBBY THE TUBA began as a story written by Paul Tripp, set to music by George Kleinsinger and performed at concerts around the U.S. It was recorded by Danny Kaye for Decca in 1945. The recording became so popular that producer George Pal decided to adapt it for his Puppetoon series. With Danny Kaye under exclusive contract to Samuel Goldwyn, Pal hired noted character actor Victor Jory to provide the voices. It was a perfect choice and Jory did a superb job not only narrating but providing the voices of Tubby, the Frog, Senior Pizzicato and all the other instruments in the orchestra who spoke. The film was nominated for Best Animated Short Subject but lost out to Warner Bros' TWEETIE PIE. As for TUBBY, he continued to be performed with symphony orchestras worldwide. Victor Jory recorded his wonderful performance for Cosmo Records and in 1975 Tripp and Kleinsinger expanded Tubby into a full-length cartoon featuring the voices of Dick Van Dyke, David Wayne and many others. But bigger was not better and the film had none of the charm of George Pal's outstanding puppetoon.

HORSE FEATHERS

1932 Paramount 70 minutes Directed by Norman Z. McLeod. With Groucho, Harpo, Chico, Zeppo Marx Bros., Thelma Todd, David Landau, Nat Pendleton, Reginald Barlow, Vince Barnett, Edgar Dearing, Robert Greig, Theresa Harris, Frank Rice, Syd Saylor, Phil Tead. With songs by Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby, HORSE FEATHERS is one of the best of the Marx Bros.' feature films. The Marxes had three film arcs - Paramount, MGM, United Artists. The Paramount films were all pre-code and, thus, were peppered with risqué material. The MGM films, while not as provocative, had much more elaborate productions (and one less Marx). The UA features were an attempt by the brothers to reclaim past glories. But it was not to be. Only Groucho succeeded through the decades as a staple on radio and television with his enormously popular quiz program YOU BET YOUR LIFE. Sons members will welcome seeing Hal Roach star Thelma Todd as the leading lady in tonight's April Fools Guest Star feature.



Next Meeting: Sunday, May 5th, 2013



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - MAY 5TH, 2013

A DAY AT THE STUDIO

1937 Hal Roach-MGM / Regal Television Productions 15 minutes. Directed by Edward Sedgwick. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Rosina Lawrence, Patsy Kelly, Lyda Roberti, Mischa Auer, James Finlayson, Bob O'Connor, Walter Long. This is a short-subject cut-down of the Hal Roach feature PICK A STAR. Laurel and Hardy make two appearances in the film and this abridgement contains all of their footage. The short was prepared in the 1950's for early television syndication.

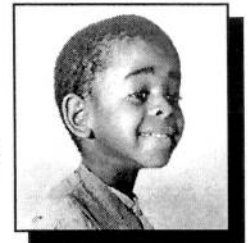


MOOSE HUNTERS

1937 WALT DISNEY - RKO Radio Pictures One Reel Directed by Ben Sharpsteen. Those three animated stooges - Mickey, Donald and Goofy - are out to hunt a moose. They use a most ingenious method of entrapment. One that I'm sure they're sorry they ever concocted!!

THE POOCH

1932 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by Robert McGowan. With Matthew "Stymie" Beard, Wheezer Hutchins, George "Spanky" McFarland, Kendall "Brisbane" McCornas, Dorothy DeBorba, Bud Fine, Harry Bernard, May Wallace, Dick Gilbert. This Rascals short must have terrified many a youngster, both in the 30's and in the 50's and 60's when the Gang showed up on television. Stymie and Spanky try to get some food and decide a good tactic is to pretend they're begging for their dog.



THE PLAYHOUSE

1921 Joseph M. Schenck - First National Pictures Two Reels Directed by Buster Keaton and Eddie Cline. With Buster Keaton, Joe Roberts, Eddie Cline, Virginia Fox, Joe Murphy. A wonderful Keaton vehicle that opens up with one of the most impressive multiple-exposure sequences done during the silent days. Buster is a stagehand who, among his adventures during the two reels, causes a mishap that requires him to make an unusual appearance on stage. Music on the soundtrack is performed by the Paragon Orchestra. Soundtrack edited and synchronized by Chelsea Rialto Studios.

OUR WIFE

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James W. Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Babe London, Blanche Payson, Ben Turpin, Charley Rogers. Dulcy's domineering dad (guess who) refuses to let her marry Oliver Norvell Hardy. An elopement is planned and all salient details are placed in Stanley's capable hands. This short has three beats - the preparation, the elopement and the denouement. Finlayson does one of his best double takes in this one. Men - aren't you glad we don't have to wear collar buttons any more!?



Next Meeting: Sunday, June 2nd, 2013



*Musical Accompaniment Composed and Performed
by Marta Waterman*

THAT'S MY WIFE

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Vivien Oakland, William Courtright, Jimmy Aubrey, Charlie Hall, Sam Lufkin. Ollie is married but he has a problem - visitor Stan who doesn't seem like he is in a hurry to leave. So Mrs. Hardy DOES. This leaves Ollie without a wife to show his Uncle Bernal, who is going to leave him his fortune IF Ollie is happily married. Solution - let Stan be Ollie's wife!!



ALL BALLED UP

1924 Pat Sullivan Productions One Reel Directed by Otto Messner. Here is the ORIGINAL Felix the Cat - long before he appeared on TV with his magic bag of tricks. Felix is out for a jaunt and encounters a frustrated golfer. Felix's assistance is not up to par!!

CALL OF THE CUCKOO

1927 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by Clyde Bruckman. With Max Davidson, Spec O'Donnell, Lillian Elliott, Leo Willis, Frank Brownlee, Edgar Dearing, Otto Fries, Charlie Hall, Fay Holderness, Lyle Tayo, Charles Meakin, and a few surprises. One of Hal Roach's more popular stars was Max Davidson - an actor and Jewish dialect comedian whose physical demeanor made him a natural for silent pictures. In this classic short Max and his family are driven to move away from their house because it is next door to the asylum. Unfortunately, their new home might drive anybody crazy. Two fellows whom you will recognize bear shaved heads from having just completed a prison picture - THE SECOND HUNDRED YEARS.



SEEING THE WORLD

1927 Hal Roach-Pathé Exchange Two Reels Directed by Robert McGowan. With James Finlayson, Joe Cobb, Johnny Downs, Allen "Farina" Hoskins, Jean Darling, Charles MacMurphy, Ed Brandenburg. Here's a unique Our Gang comedy. Hal Roach sent Jimmy Finlayson on a world tour and shot a travelogue as an Our Gang comedy. Since the kids couldn't be sent overseas, Roach got lookalike stand-ins for all the location shots in which the Gang appeared. Close-ups were done in Hollywood. For the Venice gondola sequence, an early innovative matte photography effect (not a rear projection) was used to make it look like the kids were really on location. Look sharp for one of the London onlookers!!

DOUBLE WHOOPIEE

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lewis R. Foster. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Jean Harlow, Tiny Sandford, Charlie Hall, Rolfe Sedan, Charley Rogers, William Gillespie, Hans Joby, Sam Lufkin. Aside from being a very funny Laurel and Hardy comedy, this film will enjoy everlasting fame as the one that introduced "Jeannie Weenie" in all her swanky elegance. Harlow had had several bit parts, but none that showcased her in such a glamorous - and gam-erous! - manner. The Prince is played by Hans Joby and is an obvious take off on the persona of popular actor and director Erich von Stroheim.



Next Meeting: Sunday, July 7th, 2013



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - JULY 7TH, 2013



PEST PILOT

1938 Max Fleischer - Paramount One Reel. Directed by Dave Fleischer. Voices by Jack Mercer. Our comedy salute to the Wright Brothers' invention begins with one of the Fleischer Popeye toons featuring the delightful Poopdeck Pappy, Popeye's irascible father. Pappy is perennially under foot or out of sight. In this short he wants to join his son's aviation company as a pilot. Out of the question? Not to Pappy!!

AIR FRIGHT

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Gus Meins. With Thelma Todd, Patsy Kelly, Don Barclay, Billy Bletcher, Wilfred Lucas, Gladys Blake, Charlie Hall, Bob McKenzie. In honor of our airborne program, we're bringing back this wonderful Todd & Kelly short, first screened at 281 back in our opening season. Thelma and Patsy are air hostesses. Thelma fills out her uniform and Patsy empties the plane!



The Flying Deuces

1939 Boris Morros - RKO Radio Pictures 70 minutes Directed by A. Edward Sutherland. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Jean Parker, Reginald Gardiner, James Finlayson, Charles Middleton, Jean Del Val, Crane Whitley, Richard Cramer, Arthur Housman, Eddie Borden, Harry Semels, Sam Lufkin. In 1938, Stan Laurel left Hal Roach Studios over a contract dispute. Roach then teamed Oliver Hardy with Harry Langdon for the whimsical comedy of the old south ZENOBIA. Stan was then hired by, and Ollie loaned to, producer Boris Morros

for an independent feature, THE FLYING DEUCES, which would be released through RKO Radio Pictures. Morros was also able to borrow several other Roach contract players as well as Roach screenwriters Charley Rogers and Harry Langdon. The film had a very close feel to the Roach productions. A feature-length reworking of the 1931 featurette BEAU HUNKS, THE FLYING DEUCES brought back Charles "Ming the Merciless" Middleton as the commandant of the Legionnaires. The framework with Ollie vying for Reginald Gardiner's fiancé Jean Parker was a carryover from the Boys' 1938 feature SWISS MISS, wherein Ollie fell for Della Lind, who was married to composer Walter Woolf King but was masquerading as a hotel chambermaid. One of the decided highlights of THE FLYING DEUCES is a song-and-dance number by Stan and Ollie. While the New York Times was customarily grouchy in reviewing the picture, most of the other critics were glad to see the Boys back together again, even if on familiar ground. Perhaps the best thing to come out of THE FLYING DEUCES was Oliver Hardy's marriage to script girl Lucille Jones. In later years, Lucille and her second husband (after Hardy's death) Ben Price became a good friend of the Sons of the Desert and attended many meetings and banquets. Producer Boris Morros was a longtime musical director at Paramount. His foray into producing was on an occasional basis. In 1948 he and William LeBaron formed Federal Films. Their second project after CARNEGIE HALL was a proposed remake of BABES IN TOYLAND. After purchasing the rights from Hal Roach, they submitted a new script to the Breen Office. It was summarily rejected as unfilmable as it contained "instances and implications of incest and beastiality." Rather than rewrite the treatment, Morros and LeBaron leased the original film to Robert Lippert, who reissued it under the new title MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS.

Next Meeting: Sunday, August 4th, 2013



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - AUGUST 4TH, 2013

SHOULD MARRIED MEN GO HOME?

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott and Leo McCarey With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, Kay Deslys, Dorothy Coburn, Charlie Hall, Sam Lufkin, Edna Marion, Viola Richard, Lyle Tayo. Our Golf Spectacular tees off with a reprise of a silent classic we showed last in 2012. Stan enjoys the bachelor's life and Ollie has made the marital leap. After realizing that a quiet day at home with hubby is not to be, Mrs. Hardy sends Ollie off to the golf course with Stan. A couple of girls, some hijinks on the links, and the irrepressible Edgar Kennedy set the stage for yet another tit-for-tat finale.



THREE LITTLE BEERS

1935 Columbia Pictures Two Reels Directed by Clyde Bruckman. With Moe Howard, Larry Fine, Curly Howard, Bud Jamison, Harry Semels, Nannette Crawford, Eddie Laughton, Tiny Lipson, John Tyrrell. The Stooges work for a brewery and are tasked to make a delivery to a local country club. They wind up on the links. Missing Links, that is! "Look at the Golf!"

DIVOT DIGGERS

1936 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by Robert McGowan. With George "Spanky" McFarland, Carl "Alfalfa" Switzer, Darla Hood, William "Buckwheat" Thomas, Eugene "Porky" Lee, Tom Dugan, Billy Bletcher, Leonard Kibrick, Tom Pogue. Aside from Darla having bleached hair left over from her role in THE BOHEMIAN GIRL, this short is notable as the last Our Gang Comedy that Robert McGowan directed for Hal Roach. He was the guiding spirit of the series since its inception in 1922.



THE GOLF SPECIALIST

1930 RKO Radio Pictures Two Reels Directed by Monte Brice. With W.C. Fields, Shirley Grey, Johnny Kane, Allen Wood. Fields' first talking picture is a filmed version of his famous vaudeville routine. Fields' perennial co-star (as the Caddy) was Tammany Young. However, he does not appear in this filmed version. Young did play the role when Fields repeated the routine in his 1934 feature YOU'RE TELLING ME.

TOWED IN A HOLE

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by George Marshall. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert. Back again from our Premiere Season of 2009. With the exception of a very brief appearance by Billy Gilbert, this short belongs entirely to Laurel and Hardy. The set-up is economy personified - fish salesman who decide to catch their own fish. All they need is a boat. Then, for two reels we watch as Stanley sabotages nearly every attempt made by Ollie to get their vessel (from Joe's Junk Yard) seaworthy. One of the greatest two reel comedies ever made.



Next Meeting: Sunday, September 1st, 2013



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - SEPTEMBER 1ST, 2013

THE ROGUE SONG 1930 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer 3 minutes

Directed by Lionel Barrymore. With Lawrence Tibbett, Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy.

THE ROGUE SONG is one of two lost Laurel and Hardy films (the other being their silent two-reeler HATS OFF). Produced in the early two-strip Technicolor process, THE ROGUE SONG was a successful vehicle for Metropolitan Opera star Lawrence Tibbett. However, its stage-bound technique and Technicolor process prevented the film from being reissued and the original negatives and studio print were lost in a massive vault fire at MGM. In addition to this clip, the original trailer to the film survives, as well as a portion of a ballet sequence and a complete recording of the soundtrack.



Tale of the Vienna Woods

1934 Harman-Ising - MGM One Reel Directed by Hugh Harman. An early Technicolor cartoon from MGM making use of Strauss' beautiful waltz. No real plot, just some pastorate gags with a "Pan" who comes to life as the sun's rays fill the wood.

Fra Diavolo

1933 Hal Roach-MGM 88 minutes. Directed by Hal Roach and Charles R. Rogers. Music by Daniel Auber. Musical Direction by Leroy Shield.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Dennis King, Thelma Todd, James Finlayson, Arthur Pierson, Lucille Brown, Henry Armetta, James C. Morton, Lane Chandler, Tiny Sanford, Wilfred Lucas, Walter Plinge, Leo White, Rolfe Sedan, Louise Carver, Dick Gilbert, John Qualen, Walter Long.

Laurel and Hardy star in their first of three costume pictures based upon famous operas and operettas (although they had appeared in supporting roles in MGM's original operetta, THE ROGUE SONG). Auber's opera "Fra Diavolo" was the basis for this film, originally released in 1933 as THE DEVIL'S BROTHER (Tonight's print is from the Canadian release, retitled and with altered billing).



Structurally, FRA DIAVOLO is the most linear of the Boys' three costume pictures and was very much the inspiration for RKO's buffoonery of the following season, COCKEYED CAVALIERS starring Bert Wheeler and Robert Woolsey. Unlike BABES IN TOYLAND and THE BOHEMIAN GIRL, this picture is contained in a short time period and all of the scenes are very much connected to one another. Dennis King, famous operetta star, cut a commanding figure in the role of Diavolo, alias the Marquis De San Marco. And he offered a superb musical contribution to the proceedings. In fact, this is one of King's few musical film appearances. One of the most enticing features of FRA DIAVOLO is the presence of Thelma Todd. Todd was not only a glamour queen but was also, as demonstrated here, a classic farceur. Seeing her ample talents on display in FRA DIAVOLO reminds us of the pitiable loss moviegoers suffered upon her tragic early death.

Some trivia - Diavolo's nemesis, Lorenzo, is played by Arthur Pierson. Pierson would act in films for a couple of more years and then move behind the camera as a producer and director in features and television, including several years at Hanna-Barbera. The bandit behind the bad teeth is none other than Wilfred Lucas, who had recently played the Warden in PARDON US and would later appear as Dean Williams in A CHUMP AT OXFORD. Lucas' makeup was so disguising that most reference books list his appearance as being "deleted!" For many years, THE DEVIL'S BROTHER was completely absent from public viewing (except for crudely-edited abridgements) as ownership had been retained by MGM and they did not license the film to television. However, in the 1980's it was shown on cable and subsequently released on video tape and disc.

Next Meeting: Sunday, October 6th, 2013



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - OCTOBER 5TH, 2013

DUCK SOUP



1927 Hal Roach - Pathé Exchange Two Reels Directed by Fred Guiol. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, William Austin, Madeline Hurlock, James Marcus, Bob Kortman, William Courtright, Charlie Hall. The story for this early Hal Roach All-Star comedy was based upon a play written by Stan's father, Arthur Jefferson - "Home From the Honeymoon". Fans will recognize the premise as the blueprint for their classic talkie ANOTHER FINE MESS. Stan and Babe are vagabonds who, on the run from a fire brigade press gang, seek refuge in a mansion recently vacated by its owner, Colonel Buckshot. When a couple calls to rent the palatial residence, Ollie masquerades as the owner and Stan as his maid. This was the third film (LUCKY DOG, 1921; 45 MINUTES FROM HOLLYWOOD, 1927) in which both Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy appeared. If not a classic, the short gives us the very first look at Laurel and Hardy as a team, though it would be several more shorts later until an official pairing was decided upon by Hal Roach.

THE DAYS OF THRILLS AND LAUGHTER

1961 Robert Youngson - 20th Century-Fox 93 minutes Directed by Robert Youngson
Music by Jack Shaindlin. Narrated by Jay Jackson.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Douglas Fairbanks, Pearl White, Charlie Chaplin, Harry Houdini, Harry Langdon, Monty Banks, Charley Chase, Snub Pollard, Mack Sennett, Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle, Mabel Normand, Ford Sterling, Boris Karloff, Warner Oland, Ruth Roland, Al St. John, Eric Campbell, Al Christie, George J. Lewis, Walter Miller, Edna Purviance, Martha Sleeper, Noah Young, Madeline Hurlock, Kewpie Morgan, Ben Turpin.

This is the third of Robert Youngson's landmark documentary features showcasing great scenes from silent comedies. The first, THE GOLDEN AGE OF COMEDY, was screened here at Them Thar Hills last season. The second, WHEN COMEDY WAS KING was shown at the Shadowland three years ago. In this film, Laurel and Hardy only appear in rare footage from their respective solo shorts (Stan Laurel is seen in footage from KILL OR CURE; Oliver Hardy is seen in moments from THE HOBO and SAY IT WITH BABIES). But they are joined by a bevy of great stars in long-unseen selections.



WARNER OLAND



MONTY BANKS

The final sequence, from PLAY SAFE, features Monty Banks, a diminutive Italian comic who later directed Laurel and Hardy in their first 20th Century-Fox film, GREAT GUNS. The feature version of PLAY SAFE was a notorious failure and it was cut down to a two-reeler and reissued as CHASING CHOO CHOOS.

As we journey along through the 21st Century, the great stars of the 1910's and 1920's drift farther and farther from our scope of vision. But these folks who appear in DAYS OF THRILLS AND LAUGHTER were the giants of the screen and, like the action and comedy stars of today, were the figures who most captivated audiences of the picture palaces.

Next Meeting: Sunday, October 6th, 2013



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 3RD, 2013

THE HOOSEGOW

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Tiny Sandford, Sam Lufkin, Charlie Hall, Ellinor Vanderveer, Leo Willis, Eddie Dunn. One of the early Laurel and Hardy talkies, this short could play silent as it features an abundance of pantomime. The boys seemed to veer easily from being established professionals to lingerers on life's lowest rung of the societal ladder. In HOOSEGOW they have sunk to the depths. Mr. Finlayson here is the Governor making an inspection tour. By the time the boys returned to jail in PARDON US Finn was reduced to being the prison schoolmaster! D'OH!!!



THE PAJAMA PARTY

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Hal Roach. With Thelma Todd, Zasu Pitts, Elizabeth Forrester, Eddie Dunn, Donald Novis, Lucien Prival, Jack Richardson, Billy Gilbert, Charlie Hall. Our favorite blonde bombshell is back, this time teamed with Zasu Pitts in one of the rarest of their two reel comedies. Thelma and Zasu, enroute to a rendezvous with their boyfriends, are run off the road by a society matron. The road hog offers them the refuge of her estate, allowing the girls to cause havoc at a fancy dress affair. Film fans may recognize Lucien Prival (The Baron), who played the Butler in BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN and told Una O'Connor to "Go bite your tongue off!"

THE DANCING MASTERS

1943 20th Century-Fox 61 minutes Directed by Mal St. Clair
With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Trudy Marshall, Bob Bailey, Matt Briggs, Margaret Dumont, Allan Lane, Nestor Paiva, Hank Mann, Robert Emmett Keane, Emory Parnell, Robert Mitchum, George Lloyd, Daphne Pollard, Charley Rogers, Harry Tyler, Brooks Benedict.

This was Laurel and Hardy's fourth feature film for 20th Century-Fox and, along with most of their other Fox features, has long been held in ill-repute by the purists. Certainly, it is not up to the comic standards of the Boys' Hal Roach productions, but Stan and Ollie are in good form and there are plenty of clever gags (including a chance for Stan to do another oddball characterization!). This was Robert Mitchum's sixteenth film. At this time he was mostly appearing in westerns as one of the villain's henchmen. Here he trades in his Stetson for a fedora and gives us a peek at his eventual film noir persona. Allan Lane was also a popular cowboy actor, appearing in Republic's Red Ryder series. And he would later become the voice for Mister Ed. Bob Bailey, who plays the male side of the lovebirds in THE DANCING MASTERS, became well-known to radio audiences as "Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar".



We've had a great 2013 and hope you've enjoyed the season. Next year we'll have plenty of rarities for you, as well as bringing back some favorites from the Laurel and Hardy shorts factory. We'll also have features such as SWISS MISS, JITTERBUGS and a very, very rare screening of the uncut version of Laurel and Hardy's final film, ATOLL K. And, of course, we'll be peppering our screenings with Chaplin, Keaton, Chase, Todd, Langon, and many other great comedians. We hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas, a Happy Hanukkah and a very Joyous New Year! But most importantly - KEEP LAUGHING!!

Next Meeting: Sunday, March 2nd, 2014

*The Shadowland expresses grateful
thanks to our Sponsors
for this presentation:*

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In addition to today's Holiday Classic,
these fine sponsors are supporting our
2014 Matinee at the Shadowland series:

Feb 22nd **THE HOUSE OF FEAR** - Basil Rathbone as Sherlock Holmes

Mar 8th **GULLIVER'S TRAVELS** - Max Fleischer's Animated Musical

Mar 22nd **WAY OUT WEST** - Laurel & Hardy in their Western Classic

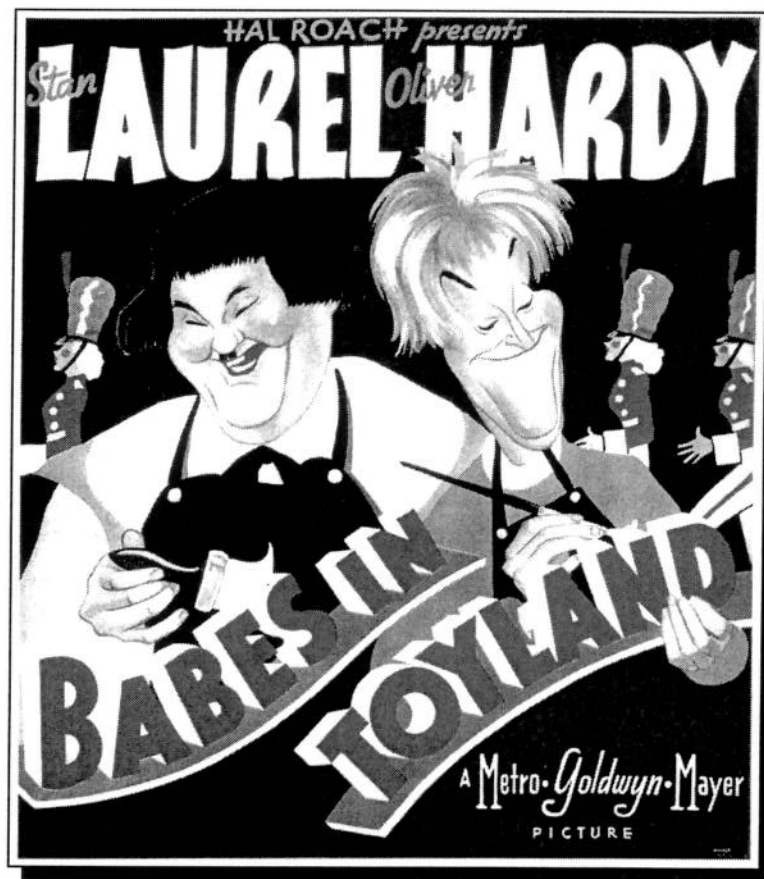
Apr 12th **OUR TOWN** - by Thornton Wilder and starring William Holden



NYSCA

SHADOWLAND THEATRE

December 21st, 2013



- Program -

AN MGM CARTOON
"ALIAS ST. NICK"

*

HAL ROACH'S RASCALS
"OUR GANG FOLLIES OF 1938"

*

Hal Roach Presents
STAN LAUREL AND OLIVER HARDY
in

BABES IN
TOYLAND

with

Charlotte Henry Felix Knight
Henry Kleinbach

Florence Roberts William Burress Johnny Downs
Marie Wilson Kewpie Morgan John George
Virginia Karnes Angelo Rossito Ferdinand Munier
Billy Bletcher Gus Leonard Charley Rogers
Tiny Sandford Spec O'Donnell

Music by Victor Herbert

Book and Lyrics by Glen McDonough

Screenplay by Frank Butler and Nick Grinde

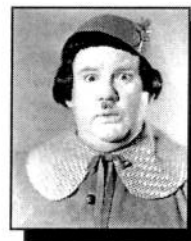
Musical Direction by Harry Jackson

Directed by Gus Meins

and Charles Rogers

Growing up in the NY metropolitan area, many of us spent our Thanksgiving or Christmas mornings glued to WPIX-TV as they unspooled their annual presentation of MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS.

Little did we know as children that this classic cinema charmer dated all the way back to 1934, or that the stage production on which it was based had its debut in 1903! As kids, we hummed along with Bo Peep and her lost sheep, roared with laughter at Stannee Dum's mismatched wedding, and hid behind the couch at the site of Barnaby and the gosh-awful bogeymen.



To the kids of today, BABES IN TOYLAND is as foreign as a rotary dial telephone. A hero who sings without pointing his fingers to the ground? Comedians being funny without talking about bodily functions? A villain who carries a cane instead of a light sabre? Creatures with plastic masks who simply growl instead of intoning evil with sub-woofer voices? Yes, all these will certainly seem quaint to today's youngsters. And yet, the denizens of TOYLAND never fail to charm every succeeding generation of children. If Laurel & Hardy and BABES IN TOYLAND can continue to entertain our youth, then maybe some semblance of innocence has a chance of surviving in at least some small corner of the American psyche. We can only hope.

Today's program actually features TWO Barnaby's. Henry Brandon, who was cast as Silas Barnaby in BABES IN TOYLAND due to his successful portrayal of Lawyer Cribbs in the L.A. stage production of THE DRUNKARD, was only 22 at the time the picture was made. Four years later, when a villain was needed for a dream sequence in OUR GANG FOLLIES OF 1938, Hal Roach brought Henry Brandon back to the studio to reprise his wonderful characterization. Yes, today at the Shadowland we're offering two shots of Brandon!!



We wish all of you a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope to see you in 2014 at our next Matinee at the Shadowland film series and our augmented Main Stage season.



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - APRIL 5TH, 2014

THE LUCKY DOG

1921 G.M. Anderson-Sun Lite Pictures. Two Reels Written and Directed by Jess Robbins. With Stan Laurel, Florence Gillette, Oliver Hardy, Jack Lloyd. We begin our Sixth Sons Season with the first film to feature both Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy. Having been in pictures for four years, Stan Laurel was making a name for himself as a screen comedian. This was his fourteenth film. As for Babe Hardy, in just seven years leading up to LUCKY DOG, he had been featured in an astonishing 228 motion pictures! Despite his size, Babe Hardy displayed a versatile range, playing villains, heroes, officials, saps and even women. In THE LUCKY DOG, Stan stars as a hapless ne'er do well who runs up against a bully thief (Hardy). Despite Stan's elusive tactics, he runs into the thief again in a more domestic setting. THE LUCKY DOG was originally thought to have been made in 1917 but we now know it was released in October of 1921.



SEEING STARS

1932 Charles Mintz-Columbia One Reel Directed by Manny Gould and Ben Harrison. This is yet another vintage cartoon that features animated interpretations of a bevy of stars. We last saw Krazy Kat encounter Laurel and Hardy in THE AUTOGRAPH HUNTER. Here they are dining at a Hollywood nightclub. Also on hand are Roscoe Ates, The Marx Bros., Joe E. Brown, Ben Turpin, Jimmy Durante, Charlie Chaplin, Harold Lloyd and Marie Dressler.

THEIR FIRST MISTAKE

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by George Marshall. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Billy Gilbert, George Marshall. One of the all-time crowd-pleasers. Mrs. Hardy takes a powder. Stan suggests trying to win her back by adopting a baby. We last saw this ultimate crowd pleaser back in 2010. This is a new print, taken from the original MGM negative. It includes a close-up of an envelope that features Stan Laurel's address at General Delivery. Not sure why this would have been deleted for the Film Classics reissue! That's director George Marshall as the neighbor waiting patiently for the wash room.



A Chump at Oxford

1940 Hal Roach-United Artists 45 minutes Directed by Alfred Goulding. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Wilfred Lucas, Forrester Harvey, Forbes Murray, Vivien Oakland, Peter Cushing, Charlie Hall, Gerald Rogers, Rex Lease, Sam Lufkin. A CHUMP AT OXFORD was the next-to-last film that Laurel and Hardy made for producer Hal Roach. Okay, here we are again on our way to Oxford with Laurel and Hardy. We originally screened the 63 minute foreign release version of this classic four years ago. Now we present the original domestic "streamliner" that US audiences saw in 1940. One of the more obscure differences in the two versions is the name of the bank - in the feature version it is the Merchants and Farmers Bank. Here it is the Finlayson National Bank! In addition to the absence of the opening two reels that were tacked on for foreign release, this Streamliner has some alternate scoring, alternate shots and differences in cutting. It should be noted that the Streamliner was only seen in its original release and that subsequent reissues were of the expanded 63 minute feature.

Next Meeting: Sunday, May 4th, 2014

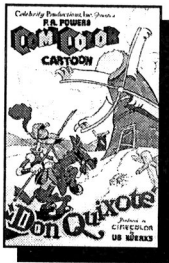


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - MAY 4TH, 2014

UNACCUSTOMED AS WE ARE

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lewis R. Foster. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Edgar Kennedy, Thelma Todd. Unaccustomed as they were...to public speaking, that is, Stan and Ollie let their voices be heard for the first time in this domestic comedy. Ollie brings Stan home for dinner but ball-and-chain Mae will have none of it. An innocent (aren't they always?) entanglement with Mrs. Kennedy (tragic beauty Thelma Todd) leads to eventual destruction and dissolution. This short was remade as the second half of the Boys' 1938 feature BLOCKHEADS. The boys were much more polished then but Minna Gombell as Ollie's wife was no match for Mae Busch!



DON QUIXOTE

1934 Pat Powers - Celebrity Productions One Reel Directed by Ub Iwerks. On sabbatical from Walt Disney Studios, animator Ub Iwerks produced a series of "Comicolor" cartoons for presenter Pat Powers. The shorts were photographed in the two-color CineColor process. Tonight's print is an actual CineColor dye transfer print, unique for having emulsion on both sides of the film, each containing a different color spectrum dye. The Comicolor cartoons were all based on fairy tales or famous children's stories (Old Mother Hubbard; Little Black Sambo; Jack and the Beanstalk; etc) and DON QUIXOTE is certainly the most obtuse as it was not considered a children's tale.

LONG FLY THE KING

1926 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels Directed by Leo McCarey. With Charley Chase, Martha Sleeper, Max Davidson, Fred Malatesta, Oliver Hardy, Sammy Brooks, John Aasen. Here's one of Charley Chase's funniest pictures from his silent period. Dapper Charley rescues a princess in distress by marrying her. But it looks like his royal marriage will be VERY short-lived. Epic in structure, Charley manages to pick up a sidekick in the person of Max Davidson and his nemeses are Fred Malatesta and a moustachioed Oliver Hardy. The first half of the film is seen in an average dupe print. The second half is a very rare amber-toned Kodascope print from the early 1930's.



THE DENTIST

1932 Mack Sennett - Paramount Two Reels Directed by Leslie Pearce. With W. C. Fields, Babe Kane, Bud Jamison, Elise Cavanna, Billy Bletcher, Dorothy Granger, Harry Bowen, Bobby Dunn. One of the most popular two-reelers of all time, THE DENTIST was the first of Fields' four shorts that he made for Mack Sennett. In addition to the medical malpractice that takes place, Fields also gets a chance to wreak havoc on the golf course. There is some very untamed physical comedy with Ms. Cavanna and the film was heavily edited in 1949 when it was incorporated into the feature compilation DOWN MEMORY LANE. For years, only the cut version was thereafter available. Fortunately we have an uncut print with original Paramount titles.

THE MIDNIGHT PATROL

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Frank Brownlee, Charlie Hall, Frank Terry, Bob Kortman, James C. Morton, Edgar Dearing, Eddie Dunn, Tiny Sandford, voice of Billy Bletcher ("Look out boys.."). One of the Stan and Ollie's funniest outings, from their prime talkie period. A beautiful balance between verbal gags and visual set-pieces. As usual, the deliberate pacing yields big payoffs in the laugh department. Casting note - the voice of the dispatcher is that of Billy Bletcher, who played the bearded patient in THE DENTIST.



Next Meeting: Sunday, June 1st, 2014

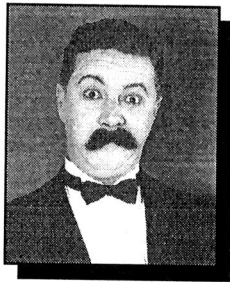
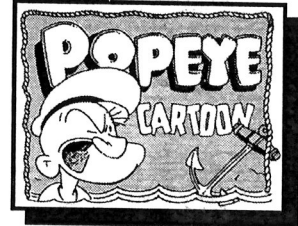


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - JUNE 1ST., 2014

THE ORGAN GRINDER'S SWING

1937 Max Fleischer - Paramount Pictures One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of Jack Mercer, Mae Questel, Gus Wickie. Here's a typical Popeye "neighborhood" short. Wimpy is grinding his organ with one hand, eating hamburgers with the other. Popeye and Olive are loving the music but Bluto can't stand the noise. Conflict ensues. Ya think!?!



RAILROAD STOWAWAYS

1926 Mack Sennett - Pathé Comedies One Reel Directed by Del Lord. With Billy Bevan, Andy Clyde, Madeline Hurlock, Vernon Dent. Tiny Ward, Irving Bacon, Spencer Bell. This is a Castle Films condensation of a Mack Sennett two-reeler originally titled WHISPERING WHISKERS. Billy Bevan and Andy Clyde co-starred in dozens of successful silent comedies and both had long careers in pictures. Clyde had his own short subject series at Columbia during the 30's, 40's and 50's while making many supporting appearances in features - including as California Carlson in the later Hopalong Cassidy westerns. Bevan became a dependable character actor and made his final appearance in Samuel Goldwyn's HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

JITTERBUGS

1943 20th Century-Fox 74 minutes Directed by Mal St. Clair. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Vivian Blaine, Robert Bailey, Lee Patrick, Douglas Fowley, Noel Madison, Robert Emmett Keane, James Bush, Anthony Caruso, Jimmy Conlin, Hal K. Dawson, Charles Halton, Sid Saylor.

While still not by any means a Roach-style Laurel and Hardy comedy, JITTERBUGS has earned a reputation as the Boys' best film made after they departed their home studio. The team seems to be enjoying themselves and Ollie, in particular, has a lot of fun going beyond his typical role of reacting to Stanley's blow-ups. One of the reasons for their energy may have been their recent stage appearances during the Hollywood Victory Caravan, which toured the United States raising War Bonds. Performing in front of live audiences must have been like being on parole from imprisonment at Fox Studios. JITTERBUGS is also graced by a terrific supporting cast including future Broadway sensation Vivian Blaine. While Blaine's ingenue role in this picture gives little hint of her bombastic "Adelide" in GUYS AND DOLLS 5 years hence, she nevertheless works well with Laurel and Hardy and offers some fine singing as well. The leading man is Bob Bailey, who would later gain radio fame in two detective series - LET GEORGE DO IT and YOURS TRULY, JOHNNY DOLLAR. Director Malcolm St. Clair, a former silent pictures helmsman, got high marks from Stan and Ollie and he remained as the team's director for the rest of their Fox features.



Next Meeting: Sunday, June 29th, 2014



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - JUNE 29TH., 2014

Our first annual "Digital Delights" features an all-DLP program. The *raison-detre* for the use of alternate technology is so that we may enjoy the elusive Foreign Language versions of classic shorts that Laurel and Hardy made in the early 1930's. Tonight's program will feature *POLITQUERIAS*, which is the expanded Spanish-language version of *CHICKENS COME HOME*. In addition to Laurel and Hardy, James Finlayson repeats his original role of the Hardys' butler. Preceding *POLITQUERIAS* will be the original German-language trailer to the Boys' 1931 feature *PARDON US*.

Also on the program is a very rare Laurel and Hardy silent short, *WHY GIRLS LOVE SAILORS*. We're still on the hunt for a film print, but for now we will take advantage of Digital Delights and enjoy this seldom-seen comedy. We also have another of those great 30's cartoons filled with caricatures of Hollywood stars, including Stan and Ollie. A couple of recently discovered newsreel appearances are also included, as well as a very special "Hal Roach adaptation" of a modern comedy classic!



Next Meeting: Sunday, August 3rd, 2014

We will begin at 2:00pm on August 3rd at the Augustine's Pool for our Pot Luck Pool Party. I will email details and directions.

Then, at 5:00pm, we will reconvene at the Club House on Briggs Highway for our film program.



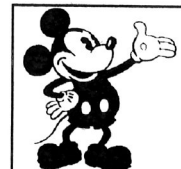
THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - SEPTEMBER 7TH, 2014

ALPINE CLIMBERS

1936 WALT DISNEY - RKO Radio One Reel Directed by David Hand.

With the voices of Walt Disney, Pinto Colvig and Clarence Nash. Our trio of Swiss Mistrs head up the Alps and encounter various bumps on the way up (and down!).



THE FIRST ROUND-UP

1934 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by Gus Meins. With Spanky McFarland, Scotty Beckett, Wally Albright, Stymie Beard, Tommy Bond, Billy Bletcher, Zoila Conan. One of the best-remembered Our Gang comedies. Wally and the Gang decide to go camping. Little Spanky and his pal Scotty want to come along but Wally nixes that - "you're too little!". But, of course, Spanky is not to be deterred and he and Scotty are on the Gang's heels.

Swiss Miss

1938 Hal Roach - MGM 72 minutes Directed by John G. Blystone. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Grete Natzler, Walter Woolf King, Eric Blore, Ludivico Tomarchio, Adia Kuznetzkof, Charles Gemora, Charles Judels, Anita Garvin, Jean de Briac, George Sorel, Stanley Blystone, Sammy Brooks, Baldwin Cooke, Lester Dorr, Tex Driscoll, Eddie Kane, Michael Mark, Bob O'Connor, Buck the Dog, Dinah the Mule.

Stan and Ollie are mousetrap salesman in Switzerland. This film is a bit of a throwback in that the Boys are somewhat supporting players to the primary storyline involving an operetta composer (Walter Woolf King - who was a foil for the Marx Bros in A NIGHT AT THE OPERA) and his singer-wife (Grete Natzler) who is working incognito at the chateau where her husband has retreated to work in peace and quiet. Of course, with Stan and Ollie in the vicinity, peace and quiet are in danger to say the least. The film was given a national spotlight when famed critic James Agee mentioned the comedy highlight of the picture in his 1949 LIFE magazine article "Comedy's Greatest Era". The Boys' comedy foil in SWISS MISS is the chateau's kitchenmeister, played by Adia Kuznetzkof. Kuznetzkof is fondly remembered by Universal horror fans for his singing of "Faro La, Faro Li" in FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN. Also in the cast is Eric Blore, who was a staple of the Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers films over at RKO, and Anita Garvin, the long-legged comedienne of Hal Roach Studios since the silent days.



Next Meeting: Sunday, October 5th, 2014

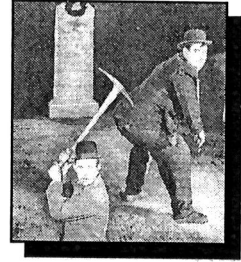


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - OCTOBER 5TH, 2014

HABEAS CORPUS

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott and Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Richard Carle, Charles Bachman, Charley Rogers. Our Scary Sunday begins with a classic silent in which the Boys are hired by a mad scientist to procure "subjects" for his experiments. Professor Padilla is played by barnstorming actor and writer Richard Carle. Carle made his Broadway debut in "Children of the Ghetto" in 1899. His second appearance in a Laurel and Hardy film was in the all-star HOLLYWOOD PARTY in 1934. Roach regular Charley Rogers plays the butler, "Ledoux". Perhaps this name was to cause some suspicions as Ledoux was the name of the secret policeman in THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA!



FRAIDY CAT

1942 Fred Quimby -MGM One Reel. Directed by William Hanna and Joseph Barbera. Here's one of the earliest Tom and Jerry cartoons from MGM. The early T&J's benefit from the lavish background designs that were customary in the Harmon-Ising cartoons, which is where Hanna and Barbera got their footing. Heard on the soundtrack as "Mammy Two-Shoes" is radio and film comedienne Lillian Randolph - a regular on THE GREAT GILDERSLEEVE program.

THE TIN MAN

1935 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels. Directed by James Parrott. With Thelma Todd, Patsy Kelly, Clarence Wilson, Matthew Betz, Cy Slocum, voice of Billy Bletcher. Here's a super-rare entry in the Todd-Kelly series. The gals get stuck on the road and seek refuge in an old house that happens to be inhabited by a mad (are there ever any other kind in two-reelers?) scientist.



PHONEY CRONIES

1942 Columbia Two Reels. Directed by Harry Edwards. With El Brendel, Tom Kennedy, Monty Collins, Dudley Dickerson, Ned Glass, George J. Lewis. While TV viewers have been enjoying Columbia's Three Stooges shorts since they hit the tube in 1959, the non-Stooge shorts have virtually disappeared from public view. One of the studio's most annoying comedians was El Brendel, who took his "yumpin' yiminy" Swedish schtick all the way to the bank. This typical "scare" comedy also features the great Dudley Dickerson, a nightclub star who became a fixture at Columbia during the 1940's.

OLIVER THE EIGHTH

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Jack Barty. A fun shudderfest with the Boys. Stan and Ollie both decide to answer an ad to marry a "wealthy young widow". Unbeknownst to them, the widow has a habit of marrying men named Oliver - and then disposing of them! So Ollie gets picked and, with Stan in tow, is in for a night of terror! OLIVER THE EIGHTH was Laurel and Hardy's last three-reeler. They would star in only six more short subjects for Hal Roach, all of them two-reelers.



Next Meeting: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014

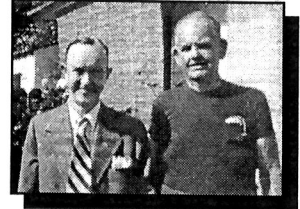


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 2ND, 2014

Stan Visits Ollie

1956 These home movies were taken when Stan and Ida Laurel enjoyed what turned out to be their last visit with Lucille and Oliver Hardy. Stan had recently suffered a stroke and you will note he does not use his left arm. Ollie had health problems as well and, by the time these movies were taken, had lost a tremendous amount of weight.



ROBINSON CRUSOELAND

1951 Fortezza Films 94 minutes Directed by Leo Joannon. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Suzy Delair, Max Elloy, Suzet Mais, Felix Oudart, Adriano Rimoldi, Robert Murzeau, Luigi Tosi, Andre Randall.

This is probably the rarest of all Laurel and Hardy films, aside from the lost HATS OFF. At least it is rare in its complete - or in this case virtually complete - form. During Laurel and Hardy's late 1940's tour of the British Isles, there were many projects that were discussed, announced, and then discarded (including a comedy version of Robin Hood). Stan and Ollie were finally persuaded to sign on to a multi-national production of an original script that would be produced and released as ATOLL K. The production was beset by one problem after another, most notably by Stan Laurel falling seriously ill and, as a result, appearing painfully thin and frail during most of the footage.

The film's original running time was 98 minutes. It was released in the British Territories as ROBINSON CRUSOELAND at 82 minutes and, eventually, in the USA as UTOPIA at 80 minutes. Over the course of several years, your Grand Sheik has acquired myriad prints of the film and, after many surgeries, we are now able to present a 94 minute reconstruction of ROBINSON CRUSOELAND that is made up primarily of original negative footage and several sequences that are from various quality dupe prints. There are a few pieces still missing which, by the miracle of digital-to-16mm printing, should be restored soon so that when we bring the film back for a second look it will be completely uncut.

ATOLL K has suffered a miserable reputation over the years, thanks mostly to the film's assessment by William K. Everson in The Films of Laurel and Hardy. However, fans who have long avoided this swan song and who finally take the plunge are actually surprised at much of the charm and character that permeates the first half of the film.

ATOLL K - seen tonight as ROBINSON CRUSOELAND - is certainly a film to spark much controversy and discussion. Our table talk at Il Paradiso should be interesting!

*Next Meeting - Weather Permitting:
Sunday, December 7th, 2014*



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM DECEMBER 7, 2014

TOYLAND PREMIERE 1934 Walter Lantz-Universal One Reel

This wonderful early Lantz toon features an all-star animated cast including Johnny Weissmuller and his then-wife Lupe Velez; Frankenstein's monster; Eddie Cantor; Shirley Temple and, of course, Laurel and Hardy. There is a splice in the nitrate original. Nobody knows what was cut. Probably a shot of the cake landing on Laurel and Hardy.



GOOD CHEER 1924 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels With Johnny Downs, Mickey Daniels, Farina Hoskins, Joe Cobb, Jackie Condon, Mary Kornman, Charlie Hall, Sam Lufkin, Noah Young. Here's a very rare Our Gang short from the silent days. The gang tries to help some orphan kids have a merry Christmas. They are, of course, as enterprising as ever! The synchronized musical score was produced using recordings by The Beau Hunks of Leroy Shields' famous themes that he composed for Hal Roach Studios.

BABES IN TOYLAND

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Nine Reels

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlotte Henry, Henry Brandon, Felix Knight, Florence Roberts, William Burruss, Kewpie Morgan, Marie Wilson, Billy Bletcher, Tiny Sandford, Tiny Lipson, John George, Angelo Rossitto, Gus Leonard, Jerry Tucker, Gene Reynolds, William Austin. Back again after five long years! This poor film has been so badly treated over the years it is amazing that it has survived intact. As early as the late 1940's, distributors began chopping pieces out of it. First thing to go was the title. When Federal Films bought the film from Hal Roach in 1948, they were unable to renew the license on the title from the Victor Herbert estate. Thus, the title was changed to MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS (the name under which the film continues to be marketed to television and on video). Next, the opening song by Virginia Kames as Mother Goose was removed because she enters from within a book titled Babes in Toyland! Next, the "Go To Sleep Slumber Deep" sequence was removed because at the end of the scene Tom Tom and Bo Peep are seen sleeping beside one another (a no-no for the 1940's censors). Then close-ups of the dreaded Bogeymen were removed. Finally, the storybook End Title was replaced because it carried a NRA emblem (National Recovery Administration). The original nitrate fine grain of BABES IN TOYLAND was rescued from the vaults when this writer was assigned to track it down for a CBS Video release. Finding the original at George Eastman House in Rochester, a 16mm reduction negative of the first reel was made for inspection purposes. Fortunately, several prints were made of this footage, as well as of the cave scene and end title so that quite a few collectors now have complete prints of the film. BABES IN TOYLAND has been artificially colorized by two different companies. THEM THAR HILLS is pleased to be able to present the complete original black-and-white version of this timeless holiday classic.



Have a Great Holiday! We'll See You in March, 2015!

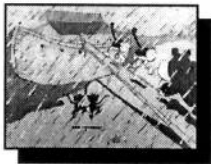


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - MARCH 8TH, 2015

THEM THAR HILLS

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert, Mae Busch, Charlie Hall, Dick Alexander, Bobby Dunn, Sam Lufkin, Eddie Baker. Once again we open our new season than with the Tent's Laurel and Hardy titlesake. Thanks to his propensity to overindulge, Ollie is ordered by Dr. Gilbert to take a trip up into the mountains where, of course, things happen! In addition to the antique charmer "The Old Spinning Wheel", Marvin Hatley's "I Wake Up With A Song" is heard on the soundtrack in this classic short. And Tent members will see right away why Mae Busch and Charlie Hall are part of our regular ceremonial proceedings.



NOAH KNEW HIS ARK

1930 Van Beuren - Pathé One Reel Directed by Mannie Davis and John Foster. This is an early talkie produced by Paul Terry for Van Beuren Studios. Typical gags based on the Bible story with plenty of opportunities for dancing duets.

WITH LOVE AND HISSES

1927 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels Directed by Fred Guiol. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Frank Brownlee, Anita Garvin, Jerry Mandy, Eve Southern, Will Stanton. WITH LOVE AND HISSES was made before the Boys were officially a team. One interesting aspect of this short - except for Stan, all of the male actors in WITH LOVE AND HISSES are made-up au natural. Stan wears his traditional clown pancake and is even more of a standout among the military recruits. There is also the practical reason that Stan's eyes did not photograph properly until the invention of panochromatic film for motion pictures. The soundtrack for this print was produced by Chelsea Rialto Studios using music composed for Laurel and Hardy Laughtoon cut-downs of the short.



STRANGE INNERTUBE

1932 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by Del Lord. With Billy Gilbert, Ben Blue, Clyde Cook, Richard Cramer, Charley Rogers, Yola D'avril, Bud Jamison. The TAXI BOYS was certainly one of the most bizarre series from the Roach lot and with this second entry, Billy Gilbert became one of the Taxi Boys - a new graduate - instead of a rival cab driver. The villain in this piece is our old friend Dick Cramer and also appearing is lovely Yola D'Avril, who had given her all for France to German soldier Lew Ayres in ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT.

TIT FOR TAT

1935 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Charlie Hall, James C. Morton, Bobby Dunn. Finally, the sequel to our namesake short, THEM THAR HILLS (which we ran at our February opener). Stan and Ollie open their new Electric Supply Store. Being neighborly, they extend the hand of friendship to the grocers next door. Stan remembers them. The grocers remember Stan and Ollie. And, in the mind of Mr. Hall, all is NOT forgiven. This was the next-to-last Laurel and Hardy two-reeler and the second Laurel and Hardy film to be nominated for an Academy Award.



Next Meeting - Sunday, March 29th



THEM THAR HILLS – Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - MARCH 29TH, 2015

NIGHT OWLS

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, Anders Randolph. Stan and Ollie are in such a poor state that they allow Officer Kennedy to talk them into robbing the Chief's house - so he can catch them and get back in his good graces. That is the entire plot of this otherwise exercise in pantomime. Director James Parrott and photographer George Stevens also supervised the Spanish version of this short - LADRONES, which features a much more elaborate finish. We will include the Spanish version of NIGHT OWLS on our all-Digital program later this season.



SEVEN CHANCES

1925 Keaton Productions-Metro Goldwyn Pictures Six Reels Directed by Buster Keaton. With Buster Keaton, T. Roy Barnes, Snitz Edwards, Ruth Dwyer, Frances Raymond, Erwin Connelly, Jean Arthur, Louise Carver, Julian Rivero, Constance Talmadge. By 1925 Buster Keaton was just hitting his stride in feature pictures. The prior year had seen successes such as OUR HOSPITALITY and THE NAVIGATOR, as well as the four-reel sensation SHERLOCK JR. Here Keaton took on an established property - a famous stage play produced by David Belasco. Adapted for the screen by Keaton collaborator Clyde Bruckman, SEVEN CHANCES begins as a whimsical situational farce and climaxes with one of the most spectacular chase finales since the deadpan comic's famous short COPS. Silent film fans may recognize Keaton's lawyer, Snitz Edwards, as the stagehand Florine Papillon in THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA. SEVEN CHANCES was remade in 1999 with Chris O'Donnell as THE BACHELOR.



THE PERFECT DAY

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, Kay Deslys, Isabelle Keith, Harry Bernard, Balwin Cooke, Lyle Tayo, Charley Rogers. An early talkie classic with the simplest of premises. The Laurels and the Hardys decide to go on a picnic. Coming along for the fun is Uncle Edgar, unfortunately suffering from gout ("too much high living" as Billy Gilbert would say!). As the Chinese say, a journey begins with a single step. Well, watch that first step cause it's a doosey and Stan & Babe have a devil of a time getting started on their "perfect day". And a we think it's a perfect end to a swell day at the Sons!



Next Meeting - Sunday, May 3rd



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - JUNE 7TH, 2015

SAILORS BEWARE

1927 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels silent with music Directed by Fred Guiol. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Anita Garvin, Frank Brownlee, Harry Earles, Tiny Sandford, Will Stanton, May Wallace, Lupe Velez. This is one of the early pairings of Laurel and Hardy though as yet they were not appearing as a "team". Stan is a hapless cabbie shanghaied aboard an ocean liner. Blustery Captain Brownlee puts him in Ollie's hands. Also aboard is a confidence duo led by a midget (Harry Earles, later of FREAKS fame). Hot tamale Lupe Velez, later RKO's "Mexican Spitfire", makes her second film appearance as Baroness Behr.

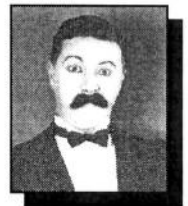


POPEYE THE SAILOR MEETS ALI BABA'S FORTY THIEVES

1937 Max Fleischer-Paramount Two Reels Photographed in Technicolor. Directed by Dave Fleischer. Starring the voices of Jack Mercer, Gus Wickie, Margie Hines, Lou Fleischer. This was the second of three Popeye "Specials" produced by Max Fleischer. All three were in Technicolor and ran two reels instead of one. This is perhaps the best of the series and was one of the last Fleischer cartoons to use his patented three-dimensional process (cel characters shown in front of a three-dimensional background).

LOVE'S INTRIQUE

1941 Warner Bros. Two Reels Produced by Gordon Hollingshead. Music by William Lava. With Billy Bevan, Kewpie Morgan, Mildred June, James Finlayson. This Vitaphone Broadway Brevetie is adapted from the 1922 Mack Sennett comedy GYMNASIUM JIM, directed by Roy Del Ruth. Warners released several shorts made up from "old time comedies" in the early 1940's.



THE BARBER SHOP

1933 Mack Sennett-Paramount Two Reels Directed by Arthur Ripley. With W.C. Fields, Elise Cavana, Harry Watson, Dagmar Oakland, Cyril Ring, Frank Alexander, Billy Bletcher, Harry Bowen, Fay Holderness, Frank Yaconelli. One of the four fabulous shorts that Fields did for Sennett during the 1932-33 season. Fields wrote the script and it is pure, undiluted W.C.

HOG WILD

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Fay Holderness, Dorothy Granger, Charles MacMurphy. Here's a combo of two Laurel and Hardy settings - domestic Boys and working Boys. We're at the Hardy home. Ollie is ready to do guy stuff with Stanley but his wife insists he put up the radio aerial first. Stan assists. Heard on the soundtrack is Leroy Shield's song "Smile When The Raindrops Fall", written for a Charley Chase short.



Parade March - Saturday, July 4th
Next Meeting - Sunday, July 5th



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - AUGUST 2ND, 2015

Our second annual "Digital Delights" features an all-DLP program. The *raison-detre* for the use of alternate technology is so that we may enjoy the elusive Foreign Language versions of classic shorts that Laurel and Hardy made in the early 1930's. Tonight's program will feature *LA VIDA NOCTURNA*, which is the expanded Spanish-language version of *BLOTTO*. Linda Loredo, who appeared in most of the team's Spanish language adaptations, plays Stan's wife. After her fine work in these alternate versions, Linda played Stan's wife in the American-only released *COME CLEAN*. Tragically, she contracted peritonitis and died a month before the film's release in September of 1931. Linda Loredo was 27 when she passed away.

Also on the program is a Stan Laurel solo short, *ORANGES AND LEMONS*, co-starring James Finlayson; and the first Hal Roach film in which both Stan and Ollie appeared - *45 MINUTES FROM HOLLYWOOD*. For our animated fare, we'll have one of the rarest of Max Fleischer's Color Classics - *PLAY SAFE*. And we'll have another adventure with Rowan Atkinson as the irrepressible Mr. Bean.



Next Meeting: Sunday, September 6th, 2015

This will be our Third Annual Oliver Hardy Golf Challenge. There are NO PRO'S, we assure you! It's just fun so please get into the swing of things! Spectators and Kibbitzers welcome! We'll tee off at 1:00pm and have our regular meeting at 3:00pm, followed by movies and dinner.

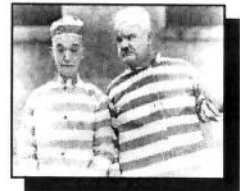


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - SEPTEMBER 6TH, 2015

THE SECOND 100 YEARS

1927 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Fred Guiol. Written by H.M. Walker and Leo McCarey. Photographed by George Stevens. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlie Hall, James Finlayson, Otto Fries, Frank Brownlee, Dorothy Coburn, Elinor Vanderveer, Bob O'Connor, Edgar Dearing, Eugene Palette. This was the first Laurel & Hardy short released by MGM and was, in fact, the first short advertised as a "Laurel and Hardy" comedy. The boys are convicts bent on busting out of stir. While their initial efforts seem to have paid off, they bite off more than they can chew and wind up sadder but wiser criminals.



JAIL BIRDS

1931 Ub Iwerks-MGM One Reel Directed by Ub Iwerks. Released the same year as PARDON US (and by the same studio), JAIL BIRDS stars Flip the Frog as a prison guard who, with his faithful horse, goes after an escaped convict.

SO LONG, MR. CHUMPS

1941 Columbia Two Reels Directed by Jules White. With Moe Howard, Larry Fine, Curly Howard, Eddie Laughton, Dorothy Appleby, Stanley Brown, Lynton Brent, Vernon Dent, Bud Jamison, Sam Lufkin, John Tyrrell, Bruce Bennett. Our Incarceration Festival continues with the Stooges as they actually try and break INTO prison to get an inmate out. Footage from this short was reused several years later to fill out BEER BARREL POLECATS, which was made during the period when Curly Howard was very ill.



PARDON US

1931 Hal Roach-MGM 56 minutes Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Walter Long, James Finlayson, June Marlowe, Wilfred Lucas, Harry Bernard, Tiny Sandford, Dick Gilbert, Eddie Baker, Bobby Burns, Otto Fries, Charlie Hall, Bob Kortman, Leo Willis. PARDON US was Laurel and Hardy's first starring feature film. They appeared in supporting roles in THE ROGUE SONG in 1930 and earlier in 1931 had starred in BEAU HUNKS, a four reel "streamliner". PARDON US was filmed at MGM on sets built for THE LAST MILE starring Preston Foster. The critical response was mixed as some reviewers, who were never enamoured with Stan and Ollie to begin with, thought that their antics did not support six reels of celluloid. One of the highlights of the film takes place during the Boys' brief escape from prison and Ollie gets a chance to do a lovely rendition of "Lazy Moon". This 1903 ballad by J. Rosemond Johnson and Bob Cole was later recorded by Harry Nilsson. By the way, warden's daughter is played by dark-haired June Marlowe, who is more familiar to you as blonde Miss Crabtree in the early talking Our Gang comedies.

Next Meeting - Sunday, October 4th

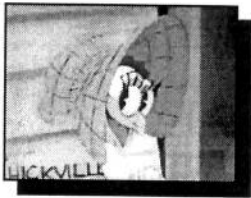
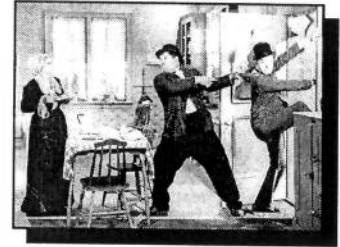


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM NOVEMBER 1, 2015

ONE GOOD TURN

1931 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mary Carr, James Finlayson, Billy Gilbert. One of the best of the Boys' "ragamuffins" shorts, wherein Stan and Ollie are victims of the Depression. They go begging for food from a sweet old lady and, in an attempt to repay her kindness, try to extricate her from the evil clutches of the fiend who holds the mortgage on her house. Trouble is, the mortgage business is all part of a mellerdrama being rehearsed for the community players. This is an especially enjoyable romp as Stan takes the rare opportunity to turn the tables on Ollie in an especially violent manner!



A STAR IS HATCHED

1938 Leon Schlesinger-Warner Bros One Reel Directed by I. Freleng. With the voices of Sara Berner, Mel Blanc, Bernice Hansen, Tedd Pierce. This Merrie Melodie was a take-off on Selznick-International's 1937 drama A STAR IS BORN. It's all about a chick from the stix who gets into pix. Of course, Hollywood was NOTHING like she imagined. Lots of caricatures of movie star favorites.

PICK A STAR

1937 Hal Roach - MGM 70 minutes Directed by Edward Sedgwick. With Jack Haley, Patsy Kelly, Rosina Lawrence, Mischa Auer, Lyda Roberti, Charles Halton, James Finlayson, Walter Long, Russell Hicks, Spencer Charters, and Stan Laurel & Oliver Hardy. PICK A STAR was producer Hal Roach's fourth non-Laurel and Hardy feature picture (although the Boys do appear in two "guest" sequences). Roach saw the handwriting on the wall with regards to the economic viability of continuing comedy short subjects. His studio was too small to absorb the cost and low returns from two-reelers. Laurel and Hardy ceased shorts in 1935; Charley Chase moved to Columbia at the end of 1936; and Roach would sell the Our Gang property to MGM in 1938. Roach's first few features had something of the feeling of very long two-reelers (in 1939 he came up with the idea of four-reel "streamliners") and it wasn't until TOPPER in late 1937 that the producer had broken through with a major feature success. PICK A STAR could easily have been a three-reeler but, with the added production numbers and guest sequences with Stan and Ollie, it fit comfortably into the feature category. The ingenue in the picture was Rosina Lawrence, who had been playing school teacher Miss Lawrence in the Our Gang comedies and co-starred with Laurel and Hardy in WAY OUT WEST. PICK A STAR was hoped to have been a breakout film for Rosina but it was not to be. In 1938 she was released from her contract and went to Italy to sing the role of Gilda in Verdi's RIGOLETTO. While there, Rosina met her future husband and she retired from performing. Many decades later she met and married John McCabe, founder of the Sons of the Desert, and the couple visited many tents and attended conventions here and abroad. Rosina Lawrence McCabe passed away in 1997. As for PICK A STAR, it was reissued by Astor Pictures in the late 1940's as MOVIE STRUCK. Subsequently, the two Laurel and Hardy sequences were released by television distributor Regal Films as a short, A DAY AT THE STUDIO. MGM, who had acquired the film along with several other Roach features as part of a contract settlement, resurrected PICK A STAR and released it on video cassette and, later, DVD.



Next Meeting - December 6, 2015

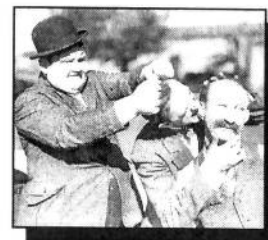


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM DECEMBER 6, 2015

BIG BUSINESS

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James W. Horne and Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Lyle Tayo, Tiny Sandford. This has been called by many the greatest two-reeler of all time. It is certainly, along with THE MUSIC BOX, the most famous Laurel and Hardy film. Selling Christmas trees in California, the Boys meet with sales resistance at almost every turn. But there comes a point when even resistance must be met with resistance! Long unseen after its initial release, BIG BUSINESS was generously excerpted in Robert Youngson's WHEN COMEDY WAS KING, which was one of the films that created a revival in interest in Laurel and Hardy.



CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR

1936 Max Fleischer-Paramount One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of Jack Mercer and Mae Questel. This delightful animated holiday treat is one of the most beloved shorts to come from Fleischer Studios. Grumpy happens by the local orphanage where the pitiable urchens are having a perfectly miserable Christmas. As always, Grumpy puts on his thinking cap and before you know it declares "I have it!" and he is off to the rescue with his ingenious improvisations.

BABES IN TOYLAND

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Nine Reels Directed by Gus Meins and Charles Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlotte Henry, Henry Brandon, Felix Knight, Florence Roberts, William Burress, Kewpie Morgan, Marie Wilson, Billy Bletcher, Tiny Sandford, Tiny Lipson, John George, Angelo Rossitto, Gus Leonard, Jerry Tucker, Gene Reynolds, William Austin. Yes, we ran this classic in 2014 but with new members, not to mention the film's unending popularity, BABES IN TOYLAND is back for an encore. And we're fortunate to have one of the rare complete uncut versions of the original 1934 MGM release. One of the great events in Sons of the Desert history was our 1986 Convention at which Henry Brandon (Barnaby), Felix Knight (Tom Tom) and Virginia Karnes (Mother Goose) were reunited for the first time since the film's original release. Massive sets and costumes were constructed and Sons members and families were treated to a recreation of the original film. It was an unforgettable experience for all who attended. And not only for the TOYLAND extravaganza - half the diners at the grand banquet came down with food poisoning from tainted fish!! Another nice mess to be sure! Ten years later the uncut version of the film was uncovered and is now available every year on television and home video. But there's nothing like shrieking at the creepy Bogey Men and having an auditorium of friends to reassure you that all is safe. So feel free to hiss the villain and enjoy the wonderful antics of Stan and Ollie.



Have a Great Holiday! We'll See You in March, 2016!



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM MARCH 6, 2016

BELOW ZERO

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Frank Holliday, Tiny Sandford, Charlie Hall, Kay Deslys, Baldwin Cooke, Blanche Payson, Leo Willis. We begin our Salute to Snow (oh brother, where art thou????) with one of the Boys' early talkies. The snow looks awfully milky, it's probably corn flakes! Stan and Babe are street musicians in the dead of winter. Not all of their songs are appropriate. But never mind. Fate takes a hand it looks like easy street is just around the corner....



THE SNOW MAN

1935 Eshbaugh Studios-Chesterfield One Reel Directed by Ted Eshbaugh. This is a black & white Official Films print of a cartoon originally produced in two-strip CineColor. While the hues are muted, the grim power of this animated fairy tale is not and this rarity continues to give nightmares!

LAUGHING GRAVY

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James W. Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlie Hall, Harry Bernard. A talkie remake of ANGORA LOVE, this short was originally shot as a three-reeler. However, it was decided that the third reel was anti-climactic with a level of pathos that seemed out-of-place with some of the outrageous slapstick that preceded it. The third reel was included in the foreign versions of the short and even the American version has been restored to some versions as an alternate cut. This is the version released to theaters in April of 1931.



ROCKIN' THRU THE ROCKIES

1940 Columbia Pictures Two Reels Directed by Jules White. With The Three Stooges, Dorothy Comingore, Lorna Gray, Dorothy Appleby, Kathryn Sheldon, Dick Curtis, Richard Fiske, Cy Schindell, John Tyrrell, Bert Young. From the Stooges' prime period, this one has them as guides for a traveling minstrel company forced to camp out in the woods after their horses are driven off by Indians. No plot, just a threadbare scenario allowing several comedy sequences to be strung together.

THE FIXER UPPERS

1935 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Charles Middleton, Arthur Housman, James C. Morton, Bob O'Connor, Bobby Dunn, Noah Young. This was the next-to-last two reeler with Laurel and Hardy. After TIT FOR TAT they would appear exclusively in feature pictures. THE FIXER UPPERS is a burlesque on romantic melodrama with the "Ever-Popular" Mae Busch bemoaning the loss of her husband's affections. Stan and Ollie, as greeting card salesmen, offer to help by making the husband jealous. They succeed - too well - and the husband (played by the wonderful Charles Middleton) challenges Ollie to a duel. Another nice mess!



Next Meeting - April 3, 2016

And be sure to attend Matinee at the Shadowland on Saturday, April 2nd, with Stan and Babe in A CHUMP AT OXFORD! 2:00pm!



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - APRIL 7TH, 2016

THE CHIMP

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Tiny Sandford, Billy Gilbert, William J. O'Brien, Bobby Burns, Martha Sleeper, Charles Gemora. It's been five years since we've run this one, so we're definitely up for a revisit with "Ethel"! Stan and Ollie work in a run-down circus and ultimately are responsible for the show's closing. Since the owner can't pay off, he gives each member part of the show. Stan gets the Flea Circus. Ollie gets Ethel the Human Chimpanzee. Somehow the Lion also gets loose so the boys have their work cut out for them - in finding a place to sleep! Charles Gemora, who plays Ethel the Chimp, owned the gorilla costume and made a long career out of playing apes and chimps on the screen.



HOLLYWOOD GOES KRAZY

1933 Charles Mintz-Columbia One Reel Directed by Manny Gould and Ben Harrison. Back in 2014 we had Krazy Kat "Seein' Stars". Well, he's back in Movieland on another adventure with more animated caricatures of your favorite personalities.

DUCK SOUP

1933 Paramount 70 minutes Directed by Leo McCarey. With Groucho, Chico, Harpo and Zeppo Marx, Margaret Dumont, Louis Calhern, Raquel Torres, Edmund Breese, Leonid Kinskey, Charles Middleton, Sidney Bracey, Edwin Maxwell. While not a big money maker in its day, DUCK SOUP has come to be acknowledged by most fans of the Marx Brothers as the team's best film. It has a great story and songs by Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby, surefire direction by the great Leo McCarey (who got his spurs at Hal Roach) and one socko comedy sequence after another. This was the last film the Marx Bros. made for Paramount. They moved over to MGM and were given big budgets and lots of promotion. To some, they seemed lost amidst the grandeur. While A NIGHT AT THE OPERA is an acknowledged classic, and A DAY AT THE RACES has great sequences and at least one socko musical sequence, the rest of the Marxes' MGM output was pedestrian at best. Part of the problem was that the Marx Brothers won their letters on the Broadway stage and thrived in the risque pre-code days of the early talkies. Their move to Metro coincided with the instillation of the Breen Office's production code and while Groucho, Chico and Harpo (Zeppo left the troupe) remained silly, their double entendres were, for the most part, a thing of the past. After their last MGM film in 1941, the Marx Brothers were off the screen for five years. Groucho and Chico both worked in radio and Harpo spent considerable time entertaining the Allied troops. The team reunited for the 1946 film A NIGHT IN CASABLANCA and then a final effort in 1949, LOVE HAPPY, which has the singular distinction of an early cameo appearance by Marilyn Monroe.



Next Meeting: Sunday, May 1st, 2016



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - MAY 1ST, 2016

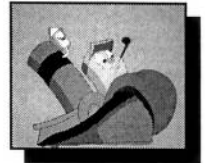


MEN O'WAR

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lewis R. Foster. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Ann Cornwall, Gloria Greer, Charlie Hall, Baldwin Cooke. We begin our May Day! May Day! Vessels in Distress festival with Stan and Ollie as sailors on leave and chasing skirts. The boys encounter two prospects in the park and proceed to offer refreshments. What follows is a variation on an old burlesque routine later adopted, and performed many times, by Abbott and Costello. The second reel is more action-oriented as the quartet decides to go for a boat ride in the lake. This cannot end well.

LITTLE TOOT

1944 Walt Disney - RKO One Reel Directed by Clyde Geronimi. With the voices of Maxine, Laverne and Patty Andrews. This animated short was originally part of the Disney pastiche feature MELODY TIME but was later released as a standalone short subject. It's a terrific fable about a little tug that could. Based on the book written and illustrated by Hardie Gramatky.



THREE MEN IN A TUB

1938 Hal Roach - MGM One Reel Directed by Nate Watt. With Spanky McFarland, Carl "Alfalfa" Switzer, Darla Hood, Billy "Buckwheat" Thomas, Eugene "Porky" Lee, Darwood Kaye, Harold Switzer and Jerry Tucker. One of the last Our Gangs to come out of Roach Studios, this is yet another epic where Alfalfa vies for Darla's attention. Since rich wimp Waldo has a swift motorboat, the Gang assembles their own vessel and do battle on Toluca Lake.

SAPS AT SEA

1940 Hal Roach-United Artists 57 minutes Directed by Gordon Douglas. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Richard Cramer, James Finlayson, Harry Bernard, Eddie Conrad, Mary Gordon, Bob McKenzie, Harry Hayden, Gene Morgan, Patsy O'Byrne, Charlie Hall, Patsy Moran, Ed Brady, Eddie Borden, Sam Lufkin, and Ben Turpin. SAPS AT SEA marked the end of Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy's association with Hal Roach Studios and this 1940 feature is a happy send-off. Many of their stock players are in the film, though sadly Harry Bernard ("well, aren't you gonna split it?") died during filming and one of his scenes was done by a look-alike. On another sad note, Ben Turpin, who makes a cameo appearance, died two months after SAPS AT SEA was released. One of the real high marks about SAPS is the performance of Dick Cramer as Nick Granger ("Old Nick"). Cramer was always a good nasty, but here he is positively scurrilous. His byplay with the Boys is a joyous thing to behold. Unlike their previous film A CHUMP AT OXFORD, SAPS AT SEA was not alternately issued as a streamliner but only as a six-reel feature film. Within a year, Laurel and Hardy were under contract to 20th Century-Fox and would make a half-dozen respectable, but not outstanding, feature length films.



Next Meeting: Sunday, June 5th, 2016



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - JUNE 5TH, 2016

HOTSY FOOTSY

1952 UPA Studios ? Columbia Pictures One Reel. Directed by William T. Hurtz. Featuring the voices of Jim Backus and Jerry Hausner. This Stephen Bosustow production features the Nearsighted Mister Magoo in one of his early theatrical cartoons. Magoo visits a gathering of Rutgers alumni. The musical score is by Shorty Rogers.



UNCONVENTIONAL BEHAVIOR

1956 Dumont Television Network 25 minutes. Directed by Frank Satenstein. With Jackie Gleason, Art Carney, Audrey Meadows, Joyce Randolph. Jackie Gleason's HONEY-MOONERS sketches were largely influenced by Laurel and Hardy. The ?Racoon Lodge? is an obvious homage to the Sons of the Desert. In 1955, Gleason decided to turn his live sketches into a half-hour filmed series. This 33rd of the 39 episodes has Ralph Kramden and his buddy Ed Norton figuring a way to go to the Racoon Convention.

SONS OF THE DESERT

1933 Hal Roach ? MGM 68 minutes Directed by William A. Seiter. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charley Chase, Mae Busch, Dorothy Christy, Lucien Littlefield, Charlie Hall, Harry Bernard, Sam Lufkin, Stanley Blystone, voice of Billy Gilbert. Our Convention Special concludes with the picture that inspired our worldwide organization. One of the great comedy features of all time, SONS OF THE DESERT is the ultimate Laurel and Hardy domestic comedy and features the Ever-Popular Mae Busch in her signature role as Mrs. Hardy. The plot is simple ? the Sons are having their annual convention in Chicago and Ollie must figure a way to go (Stan's lovely wife gave her permission without blinking an eyelash). Ollie's cooked up story backfires bigtime and now they must figure out a way to explain things. One of the unexpected delights in this picture is Charley Chase's hilarious role as an obnoxious conventioneer. An unforgettable classic. Enjoy!



Next Meeting: Sunday, July 3rd, 2016

JULY 4TH - THE PARADE!



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - JULY 3RD., 2016



1967 Robert Youngson / 20th Century-Fox 97 minutes Directed by Robert Youngson. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charley Chase, Edgar Kennedy, James Finlayson, Bryant Washburn, Snub Pollard, Jean Harlow, Billy West. This was the next-to-last of Robert Youngson's critically and popular successful series of compilation features that brought back to the moviegoing public the great comedians of the silent era. While Laurel and Hardy are the primary focus of the excerpts shown, there are also delightful vignettes with Charley Chase and other Hal Roach stars. You'll also get a chance to see Oliver Hardy in several of his pre-Roach appearances with Chaplin imitator Billy West. A personal observation about the musical score for this feature. While THE GOLDEN AGE OF COMEDY and, in particular, WHEN COMEDY WAS KING, featured musical scores that amplified the antics on the screen and reflected the period in which they were made, THE FURTHER PERILS OF LAUREL AND HARDY features a score that reflects the beat of the late 1960's. The result is a film that actually seems more dated than its predecessors because it is musically anchored in an anachronistic period. Despite that personal carp, I think you will find this a remarkably enjoyable film. And a film, I might add, that has been out of distribution for more than four decades.

PARADE TOMORROW!!!

Next Meeting: Sunday, August 7th, 2016



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - AUGUST 7TH, 2016



THEIR PURDIE MOMENT

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Anita Garvin, Kay Deslys, Fay Holderness, Lyle Tayo, Tiny Sandford, Leo Willis, Jimmy Aubrey, Sam Lufkin, Gene Morgan, Patsy O'Byrne. A silent short from the domestic side of the Laurel and Hardy canon, with the boys ditching their wives and taking up with a couple of flappers. This scenario was partially reworked in the Boys' 1936 feature OUR RELATIONS.

A SWISS TRICK

1931 Van Beuren - RKO Radio Pictures One Reel Directed by John Foster and Vernon Stallings. This is one of the early talking cartoons by Van Beuren Studios featuring Tom and Jerry, a cartoon team more in the mold of Mutt and Jeff than in the later same-named cat and mouse characters. When the RKO Tom and Jerry cartoons were released to the home video market in the 1950's they were renamed "Dick and Larry" by Official Films so as not to incur the legal wrath of MGM.



THE PIP FROM PITTSBURGH

1931 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Charley Chase, Thelma Todd, Dorothy Granger, Kay Deslys, Carlton Griffin, Harry Bernard, Baldwin Cooke, Charlie Hall, Frank Holliday. This is one of Charley Chase's most delightful shorts, thanks in no small measure to the appearance of Thelma Todd. Charley is set up with a blind date who his pal insists is a "Pip". Charley is sure he's getting set up with loser and decides to do everything he can to discourage her. Then he meets her!

HARRIS IN THE SPRING

1937 RKO Radio Pictures Two Reels Directed by Leslie Goodwins. With Phil Harris, Joan Barclay, Ruth Robbins, Jack Carson, Eddie Kane, Jack Rice. This was the third and final short that bandleader Phil Harris made for RKO. His first, SO THIS IS HARRIS, won the Academy Award for Best Live Action Short Subject. By 1937, Harris was a regular on The Jack Benny Program and he was getting better parts in features. The highlight of this two-reeler is Phil's performance of his signature tune "That's What I Like About the South".



BRATS



1930 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy. Here's a double-dose of Stan and Babe. In fact - two "babes". In BRATS, Stan and Ollie play themselves AND their own children. The short is a delightful exercise in creative set-dressing, clever special effects, wonderful pantomime and pure L&H silliness. If there is a message in this film, it might be that grown-ups can be just as childish - perhaps moreso - than their offspring. A soundtrack note. BRATS, originally released with non-studio jazz recordings on the soundtrack, was reissued in 1937 with a new modern musical score by Leroy Shield. The reissue print is the version being shown this evening. Both editions appear on the DVD set Laurel and Hardy the Essential Collection.

Next Meeting: Sunday, September 4, 2016
"The 4th Annual Oliver Hardy Golf Challenge"



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - SEPTEMBER 4, 2016

AT YOUR SERVICE MADAME

1936 Leon Schlesinger - Warner Bros. One reel. Directed by Isadore Freleng. With the voices of Tedd Pierce and Martha Wentworth. Here is one of the more extensive cartoon caricatures of a Hollywood personality, with W. C. Squeals doing a parody of the great W. C. himself. Squeals would return in 1938's CRACKED ICE, heckled off-screen by Fields' radio nemesis Charlie McCarthy. Mrs. Hamhocks and little Piggy were seen again in 1937's genuinely frightening toon PIGS IS PIGS.



MISTER SMARTY

1936 Columbia Two Reels Directed by Jack White. With Andy Clyde, Leora Thatcher, Bud Jamison, Tommy Bond, Frank Mills, Tiny Lipson, Robert McKenzie, William J. O'Brien, Al Thompson, Harry Tenbrook. The Three Stooges were far from the only comedy series churned out by Columbia. For 22 years, Andy Clyde starred in his own slapstick farces while also making supporting appearances in feature pictures. Clyde's shorts had plenty of physical comedy and his longtime stuntman was Al Thompson, who earns his pay in this early entry in the series.

OUR RELATIONS

1936 Hal Roach-MGM 72 minutes Directed by Harry Lachman.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Alan Hale, James Finlayson, Daphne Pollard, Iris Adrian, Lona Andre, Betty Healy, Sidney Toler, Arthur Houseman, John Kelly, James C. Morton, Harry Bernard, Charlie Hall, Ralf Harolde, Noel Madison, Tiny Sanford, Del Henderson, Fred Holmes, Alex Pollard, Lee Phelps, Harry Wilson. OUR RELATIONS was the first of two films officially supervised by Stan Laurel (the second, WAY OUT WEST, actually carried an on-screen credit "A Stan Laurel Production"). Stan had been acting as defacto supervisor but was not given front office backing. Now he was in charge of how the money was spent as well as how the comedy was plotted and the result is easily the most handsome production in the Laurel and Hardy series. In addition to Rudolph



Mate's exquisite camerawork, the sets are of the highest art deco design and set the tone for Roach's blockbuster of the following year, TOPPER. As for the film, it's a deft blend of visual and verbal set-pieces with the Boys getting fine support from Daphne Pollard and Betty Healy as their wives. James Finlayson is given prime screen time, only to be topped in 1937's WAY OUT WEST. The director, Harry Lachman, would be reunited a few years later with Sidney Toler as they worked their way through several Charlie Chan mysteries at 20th Century-Fox. The music in OUR RELATIONS is all-new, although much of the score written for the picture by Leroy Shield was replaced by Shield's stock cues that he had newly-composed for the 1936-37 Our Gang program of shorts.

Next Meeting - October 2nd



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program October 2nd, 2016

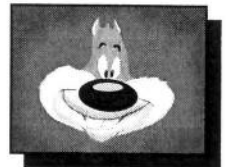


ME AND MY PAL

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Marion Bardell, James Finlayson, Frank Terry, Eddie Dunn, Bobby Dunne, James C. Morton, Eddie Baker, Charles McMurphy, voice of Billy Bletcher. This one is a real puzzler. Literally! Ollie, ensconced in high society, is about to get married to the daughter of an oil magnate. Stan brings him a wedding present - a jigsaw puzzle (so Ollie will have something to do at night!!). Naturally, Stan has to try it out and before you know it Ollie's life is in pieces.

HAPPY GO NUTTY

1944 Fred Quimby-MGM One Reel Directed by Tex Avery. With the voices of Wally Maher and Dick Nelson. By far the strangest character ever to come out of the "more stars than there are in heaven" studio was Screwy Squirrel. Created by Tex Avery with the sole purpose of causing anarchy at the stoic MGM, Screwy Squirrel was an utter annoyance to studio chief L.B. Mayer. One wonders if it was just coincidence that Screwy's voice was provided by ubiquitous radio actor Wally Maher (pronounced Mayer!). Regardless, MAYER hated the damned squirrel and demanded that he be "killed off". Which he was - in a toon to be shown here at a later, unhappier date! On a much more tragic note, Wally Maher didn't last much longer than Screwy as he died of a massive heart attack in 1951 at the age of 43.

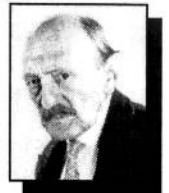


THE FLOORWALKER

1916 Lone Star-Mutual Two Reels Directed by Charles Chaplin. With Charlie Chaplin, Eric Campbell, Edna Purviance, Albert Austin, Charlotte Mineau, Leo White, Henry Bergman, Lloyd Bacon, Frank J. Coleman. THE FLOORWALKER was Chaplin's first two-reeler made Lone Star/Mutual and it marked a giant leap forward after his earlier years of development in pictures. In addition to the free work environment provided him, Chaplin also assembled an outstanding stock company of actors who appeared in nearly all of the 12 Mutual pictures. By the way, Lloyd Bacon, who plays the floorwalker, went on to become one of the busiest (and fastest) directors in Hollywood, specializing in comedies and musicals.

SHRIMPS FOR A DAY

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Gus Meins. With Joe Young, Doris McMahan, Spanky McFarland, Scotty Beckett, Matthew "Stymie" Beard, Billy "Buckwheat" Thomas, Marianne Edwards, Jerry Tucker, Leonard Kibrick, Clarence Wilson, George and Olive Brasno, Herbert Evans, Wilfred Lucas, Ray Turner. Here's a favorite of Our Gang fans. The kids are taken by their orphanage to a wealthy home for a party. Mary Wade, who is throwing the party, finds an old lamp upon which she and her boyfriend make a wish to become kids again. Before you know it, they're pint size in the form of famous midget actors George and Olive Brasno. Clarence Wilson has one of his most memorable roles as "Mr. Crutch" and Mary's boyfriend Dick is played by Robert Young's older brother Joe. Incredibly, Joe outlived brother Bob by one year and died at age 99.



DIRTY WORK

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Lucien Littlefield, Samuel Adams. Stan and Ollie are chimney sweeps (a dubious choice of professions after what happened in HOG WILD!) and they've come to clean the flue at Professor Noodle's nook. Caught between Laurel and Hardy's incompetence and the nutty professor's noodling is Jessup the butler, played with delightful stoicism by Sam Adams. You may remember the professor as the veterinarian sent for by Stan in SONS OF THE DESERT. In this picture he is decidedly more mad than befuddled. By the end of the second reel, Stan, Ollie, and the professor's chemicals collide for a startling finale.

Next Meeting: Sunday, November 6, 2016



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program November 6, 2016



"THE POLITICIAN"

1951 TCA Productions 25 minutes Directed by Jean Yarbrough. With Bud Abbott, Lou Costello, Sidney Fields, Gordon Jones, Hillary Brooke, Joan Shawlee, Selena Walters, Donald Kerr, Gloria Talbott, Charles Cane, Bingo the Chimp. We begin our Election Special with the most unlikely candidate since...since...oh well. I guess some folks wish they COULD vote for Lou Costello this year!! Anyway, here is classic Bud & Lou burlesque dressed up - or down - for the ballot box!!

OLIVE OYL FOR PRESIDENT

1948 Famous Studios - Paramount One Reel Directed by Izzy Sparber. With the voices of Jack Mercer, Mae Questel and Jackson Beck. This latter-day Popeye cartoon came out at the beginning of the 1948 Presidential campaign. This was the year when the Chicago Tribune famously proclaimed Dewey the winner over Truman. Olive Oyl has no patience for slick poli-talk so she gives out with her own brand of plain speaking.



ELECTION DAZE

1943 MGM One Reel Directed by Herbert Glazer. With Robert Blake, Froggy Laughlin, William "Buckwheat" Thomas, Janet Burston. We're using Election Day as the perfect excuse to show you what happened to Our Gang after Hal Roach sold the franchise to mega-studio MGM. This one is from the final season of shorts produced with the Gang and is pretty much on par with the series since its switch to Metro in 1939. ELECTION DAZE was released during the campaign in which Tom Dewey challenged Franklin Roosevelt. We know how THAT one turned out, too! Incredibly, this short was co-written by Robert MacGowan, who helmed the Our Gang shorts for Hal Roach in the late 20's and early 30's. MacGowan's age and the studio factory methods obviously had a detrimental effect on his creativity. Still, it's an interesting look at the little boy who would grow up to be the focus of a monstrous Hollywood murder trial.

THREE DARK HORSES

1952 Columbia Pictures Two Reels Directed by Jules White. With Moe Howard, Larry Fine, Shemp Howard, Kenneth MacDonald, Ben Welden. The Stooges are hired by political chiseler MacDonald to nominate his crooked candidate for President. Perhaps the most dastardly deed was done by Producer Jules White, who used an image of the LATE Bud Jamison for candidate Hammond Egger!



CHICKENS COME HOME

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Thelma Todd, James Finlayson, Patsy O'Byrne, Frank Holliday, Norma Drew, Frank Rice, Baldwin Cooke, Charles K. French. And, of course, the best for last. We last saw this short in its expanded Spanish incarnation, POLITIQUERAS. A blackmailing vampire out of Oliver Hardy's past shows up and blackmails him, threatening his political campaign. Stan is given the job of keeping her away from Ollie's house.

Next Meeting: Sunday, December 11, 2016
OUR ANNUAL TRIP TO TOYLAND!



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program December 11, 2016

The Jack Benny Program: Christmas Shopping

1960 J&M Productions-Desilu 25 minutes Directed by James V. Kern. With Jack Benny, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Don Wilson, Dennis Day, Mel Blanc, Frank Nelson, Benny Rubin, Richard Deacon, Rolfe Sedan, Maxine Semon, Paul Maxey, Bess Flowers. This

is one of the funniest half-hours ever produced for television. And why not - they had a LOT of practice getting it right. The Christmas Shopping Show was an annual tradition on Jack Benny's radio program beginning in 1946. It all began when Jack decided to buy Don Wilson a pair of shoe laces and couldn't decide on metal tips or plastic tips. Over the years, Mel Blanc as the harassed sales clerk sought psychiatric care, was moved to various departments at the store but Jack always found him. The TV episode makes no assumptions and gives Mel a fresh start. This episode was shot in front of a live audience and, at one point, Jack has a lot of trouble keeping a straight face. Benny was a great comedian, but he was an even better audience!



Mel Blanc



BABES IN TOYLAND

1934 Hal Roach-MGM 79 minutes Directed by Gus Meins and Charles Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlotte Henry, Henry Brandon, Felix Knight, Florence Roberts, William Burress, Kewpie Morgan, Marie Wilson, Billy Bletcher, Tiny Sandford, Tiny Lipson, John George, Angelo Rossitto, Gus Leonard, Jerry Tucker, Gene Reynolds, William Austin. It's a Holiday tradition, our annual trip to Toyland. Stan and Babe's charming version of Victor Herbert's 1903 operetta was quickly forgotten after its 1934 theatrical release. After buying the property from Hal Roach and then scrapping ideas for a remake, William LeBaron and Boris Morros licensed the film to Robert Lippert who reissued it as MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS. Due to restrictions from the Herbert estate, the original title and opening song were cut and the censors demanded the cave song be eliminated. Some prints had gruesome scenes of the bogeymen cut out. Over the years, MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS became a TV staple at holiday times, recently in a ghastly colorized version. But now we are able to present the MGM uncut original release in all its black-and-white glory (and gory!). BABES IN TOYLAND deserves a place among the greatest of Holiday classics and it will continue to be celebrated at Sons of the Desert tents the world over.



Have a Great Holiday! We'll See You in March, 2017!



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program March 5th 2017

YOU'RE DARN TOOTIN'

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Edgar Kennedy and Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Otto Lederer, Wilson Benge, Charlie Hall, Rolfe Sedan, Sam Lufkin. One of the Boys' truly classic silent comedies. Just enough of a scenario to get them from the bandstand to the boarding house to the streets of Culver City where they literally scare the pants off passersby! Ever since 1927's THE BATTLE OF THE CENTURY, Stan and Ollie routinely found themselves in "tit for tat" situations. This is one of the best. YOU'RE DARN TOOTIN' is one of two Laurel & Hardy shorts directed by Edgar (E. Livingston) Kennedy, a frequent co-star of the Boys in both silent and early talkie shorts.

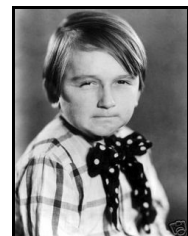


PUTTIN' ON THE ACT

1940 Max Fleischer-Paramount One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of Jack Mercer and Margie Hines. Here's one of the few Popeye cartoons that did not feature the spinach-loving sailor's chief rival Bluto. In this highly entertaining snapshot, Olive and Popeye are excited that vaudeville is making a comeback. They dig into their old theatrical trunk and start rehearsing their act. Jack Mercer gets to show off some of his vocal mimicry in this short.

READIN' AND WRITIN'

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Robert McGowan. With Kendall McComas, June Marlowe, Sherwood Bailey, Wheezer Hutchins, Stymie Beard, Dorothy deBorba, Otto Fries, Harry Bernard, Donald Haines, May Wallace, Lyle Tayo. This is one of the iconic Our Gang shorts. Brisbane is sick of going to school and decides to play hooky. More than that, he gets the idea of having himself expelled. This short demonstrates director McGowan's deft handling of both cast and material and his ability to inject genuine emotion without getting maudlin like the later MGM-produced shorts is a tribute to his talent and that of the entire Our Gang unit at Roach.



MAID IN HOLLYWOOD

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Gus Meins. With Thelma Todd, Patsy Kelly, Don Barclay, Constance Bergen, Eddie Foy Jr., Billy Gilbert, Jack Barty, Alphone Martell, Harry Bernard, Billy Bletcher, Dick Gilbert, Charlie Hall, James C. Morton, Charley Rogers, Pat West. One of the delightful shorts starring Thelma Todd and Patsy Kelly (she had recently taken over for Zasu Pitts). A switch on the old plot, instead of going to Hollywood with stars in their eyes, Thelma and Patsy are LEAVING Hollywood with sawdust in their veins. But they get a last-ditch idea that might lead to success. By the way - the would-be actress in this short is played by Constance (Connie) Bergen, wife of Edgar and eventual mother of Candace.

THEIR FIRST MISTAKE

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by George Marshall. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Billy Gilbert, George Marshall. One of the all-time crowd-pleasers. Mrs. Hardy takes a powder. Stan suggests trying to win her back by adopting a baby. Billy Gilbert has a great role as a swarthy process server. This entire short is simply littered with double entendres and impolite innuendoes. Even though it was released before the institution of the production code, it almost seems like this film was made for one of the studio stag parties! That's director George Marshall as the neighbor waiting patiently for the wash room.



NEXT MEETING: APRIL 2ND

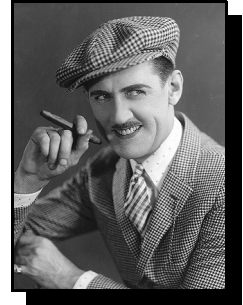


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - APRIL 2ND, 2017

THE CARETAKER'S DAUGHTER

1925 Hal Roach-Pathe Two Reels Directed by Leo McCarey. With Charley Chase, Katherine Grant, George Siegmann, William J. Kelly, Symona Boniface, James Parrott, James Finlayson. We open with a rare one. A Charley Chase silent short directed by the great Leo McCarey. Charley's brother, James Parrott, plays the real caretaker in the second reel (Charley and Fin are faux caretakers). The burly fellow buying a used car is played by George Siegmann, who was one of the villains in D.W. Griffith's BIRTH OF A NATION. The synchronized musical score was produced by Chelsea Rialto Studios using Hal Roach themes played by the Beau Hunks orchestra.



VOODOO IN HARLEM

1938 Walter Lantz-Universal One Reel Directed by Rudy Zamora. One of Max Fleischer's most popular cartoons was his "Out of the Inkwell" series with Koko the Clown. Universal's Walter Lantz turned Fleischer's perennial favorite on its end and came up with this outlandish musical wherein an animator (Lantz) leaves his desk and ink drops turn into wild African natives. Obviously, this cartoon would be completely banned from exhibition today but the Sons of the Desert are a hard-shelled bunch and we're sure you can take it!!

PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES

1932 Hal Roach - MGM 61 minutes. Directed by Ray McCarey and George Marshall. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Donald Dillaway, Jacquie Lynn, James Finlayson, Frank Brownlee, Billy Gilbert, Grady Sutton, Rychard Cramer, Charles Middleton, Richard Tucker, Mary Carr, Jim Mason, Adele Watson, Tom Kennedy, Muriel Evans, C. Montagu Shaw, Robert Barrat, Baldwin Cooke, Mary Gordon, Dick Gilbert, Lew Kelly, Charley Rogers, Elinor Vanerver, Frank Rice, George Marshall. We're bringing back Laurel & Hardy's second starring feature for the first time since our fledgling season of 2009. In PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES, Stan and Ollie are dougboys and, in due course, veterans of the Great War. This picture has many delicious moments including a hilarious drill routine with Frank Brownlee as the most exasperated sergeant in the history of military comedies. But the biggest surprise is the hilarious performance by director George Marshall as "Pierre" the company cook. The story concerns the Boys' antics in the army and their subsequent efforts to look after the child of a fallen comrade. There's a fine cast of supporting players including Charles "Ming the Merciless" Middleton, who had previously appeared with the Boys as the Foreign Legion commandant in BEAU HUNKS.



Next meeting: Sunday, May 7th



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - MAY 7TH, 2017

THE BATTLE OF THE CENTURY

1927 Hal Roach-Pathe Two Reels Directed by Clyde Bruckman. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Noah Young, Eugene Pallette, Wilson Bengé, Bob O'Connor, Anita Garvin. This is a rare treat indeed. For many years, the only footage available from this short was 3 minutes of the pie fight finale that appeared in Robert Youngson's compilation THE GOLDEN AGE OF COMEDY. About 20 years ago most of the first reel was found, which included the entire boxing match sequence. Then, in 2015, Jon

Mirsalis bought the collection of Youngson's late partner and discovered, in an unmarked can, the entire second reel of the film. Still missing is a brief scene at the end of reel one where insurance salesman Eugene Pallette sells Hardy a policy on Stan, given his pugilistic failings. Jon Mirsalis was gracious enough to include yours truly in a very limited run of duplicate prints from the second reel. With a 16mm print made from a digital master of the previously-found first reel, we are today presenting one of the first screenings of this now nearly-complete Laurel and Hardy classic. To provide continuity between the first and second reels, we've added a descriptive title which fills in the narrative. You will see Eugene Pallette briefly during the pie fight sequence as he once again touts his indispensable insurance.



Scene still missing



BONNIE SCOTLAND

1935 Hal Roach - MGM 80 minutes. Directed by James W. Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, June Lang, William Janney, David Torrence, James Finlayson, Anne Grey, Vernon Steele, Maurice Black, Mary Gordon, Daphne Pollard, David Clyde, May Beatty, Lionel Belmore, Dick Wessel, Brandon Hurst, Olaf Hytten, Claude King, Minerva Urecal, Major Sam Harris. This was the Boys' first feature film to be released after Roach discontinued their series of shorts. Stan was not happy with the results and, admittedly, the film nearly relegates Laurel and Hardy to supporting roles for a thoroughly uninteresting love story enacted by two thoroughly uninteresting juveniles. Nevertheless, the film has several comedy set-pieces that more than make up for the weak storyline. As for Stan's disappointment with the results, he took matters in hand and created Stan Laurel Productions. The first Laurel and Hardy feature to be shot at Roach under these auspices was OUR RELATIONS which was a monumental improvement over BONNIE SCOTLAND. As for the latter, along with THE DEVIL'S BROTHER it was reissued theatrically by Astor Films (as HEROES OF THE REGIMENT) and subsequently licensed by Regal Television and chopped up into 15 minute segments for syndication.



Next meeting: Sunday, June 4th



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program June 4th 2017

STICK AROUND

1925 Billy West-Cumberland Prod. Two Reels Directed by Ward Hayes. With Bobby Ray, Oliver Hardy, Hazel Newman, Harry McCoy. After Babe Hardy left Larry Semon he went to work for Billy West. West, as a comedian, was the most famous of Chaplin imitators. As a producer, he strove to achieve the prolific stature of Mack Sennett. By mid-1929 his divorce had drained his bank account and he returned to work-for-hire as a director and bit player. This two-reeler is a precient peek at what the later team of Laurel and Hardy might look like. In fact, the film has often been mis-identified as an L&H title. The film retained its popularity due to Castle Films issuing a one-reel version entitled THE PAPERHANGER'S HELPER.



SHOULD TALL MEN MARRY?

1928 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels Directed by Clyde Bruckman. With Stan Laurel, James Finlayson, Stuart Holmes, Martha Sleeper, Theodore von Elz, Edgar Dearing. This was a well-received western farce that made its way to the Kodascope Library and was distributed in 16mm prints throughout the 1930's. It's a sendup of the melodramatic horse operas that were very much in vogue in the late 20's, with Fin the rancher, Martha his daughter and Stan the hapless helper.

POOL SHARKS

1915 Gaumont-Mutual One Reel Directed by Edwin Middleton. With W. C. Fields, Marian West, Larry Westford, Bud Ross. In 1915 W. C. Fields was one of the biggest stars of Florenz Ziegfeld's FOLLIES. His skill as a juggler was great enough, but like his fellow Ziegfeld performer Will Rogers, Fields peppered his routines with verbal gems that endeared him to the wiseguys of Broadway. POOL SHARKS was shot during a summer break and was intended as the first of several shorts Fields would make for the Gaumont Company. But he was dissatisfied with the results and remained exclusive to Ziegfeld for the next 6 years. After starring in POPPY on Broadway Fields returned to the movies for a film version called SALLY OF THE SAWDUST. After that, he remained almost exclusively in California under contract to Paramount Pictures. In 1939 he moved to Universal and remained under contract until his death in 1946..



THE BLACKSMITH

1922 Joseph M. Schenck-First National Two Reels Directed by Buster Keaton and Mal St. Clair. With Buster Keaton, Virginia Fox and Joe Roberts. Released the same year as COPS, THE BLACKSMITH is a classic Keaton short that beautifully demonstrates the possibilities when limited to a single set and a small cast. First National no doubt appreciated the frugality of Keaton's production after the massive costs that went into making COPS. Once again, Keaton's foil is burly Joe Roberts, who died only a year after this picture's release.

COUNTY HOSPITAL

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert, William Austin, May Wallace, Sam Lufkin. Here's another TTH premiere. Stan and Ollie made this 1932 comedy after their arduous three-reeler THE CHIMP. The first two-thirds of this economical short take place in Ollie's hospital room. The finale is one of the most ludicrous free-wheeling auto sequences thanks to a truly absurd example of process photography. You wonder whether the team at Roach really expected to get away with it until the car makes a full 360 degree turn in front of the rear-projection screen. At that point we realize that everyone is in on the gag. One thing this short did leave to posterity - "Hard boiled eggs and nuts!"



NEXT MEETING: JULY 2ND
ELLENVILLE PARADE: JULY 4TH!



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - JULY 2ND, 2017

THE HOLLYWOOD REVUE OF 1929

1929 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer One Reel excerpt Directed by Charles F. Reisner. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Jack Benny. In the early years of the talkies, most of the big studios gathered all their stars under one marquee and "put on a show". MGM's entry was the HOLLYWOOD REVUE. The proceedings were hosted by Conrad Nagel and Jack Benny (in his earliest surviving film performance). Laurel and Hardy performed a comedy magic act. Their routine was repeated by Abbott and Costello fifteen years later in LOST IN A HAREM, also directed by Charles Reisner. Stan and Ollie would return to MGM a few months later to film THE ROGUE SONG, a Technicolor feature that is now lost except for a few scenes and its trailer.



A PAIN IN THE PULLMAN

1936 Columbia Two Reels. Directed by Jack White
With Moe Howard, Larry Fine, Curly Howard, James C. Morton, Bud Jamison, Eddie Laughton, Ray Turner, Ethelreda Leopold. The Stooges are part of a theatrical troupe heading by train to their next booking. That's really all you need to know except they have a monkey with them. A PAIN IN THE PULLMAN was remade by Columbia in 1947 starring Gus Schilling and Richard Lane.

The Bohemian Girl

1936 Hal Roach - MGM 70 minutes. Directed by James W. Horne. Musical Direction by Nathaniel Shilkret. Based on the operetta by Michael W. Balfe. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Jacqueline Wells, Mae Busch, Antonio Moreno, Darla Hood, Felix Knight, James Finlayson, William P. Carleton, Zeffie Tilbury, Mitchell Lewis, Harry Bernard, Eddie Borden, Bob O'Connor, Bobby Dunn, Margaret Mann and Thelma Todd.

This was the third of Laurel and Hardy's film adaptations of famous opera/operettas. It was a vast improvement over their previous feature BONNIE SCOTLAND, but Stan still felt that Hal Roach was saving money at the team's expense and the comedian took over supervision of their films on their next project. Nevertheless, THE BOHEMIAN GIRL has several wonderful comedy sequences and some truly hilarious moments. Eddie Borden's turn as a foppish nobleman is a delight and Jimmy Finlayson does one of the broadest "takes" of his career. Mae Busch plays the acid-toned Mrs. Hardy and Jacqueline Wells (who changed her name to Julie Bishop when she went under contract at Warner Bros) plays the title role. Of the several songs, the most endearing and enduring is "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls", with Rosina Lawrence singing for Ms. Wells. Singing "Will You Remember Me" is Felix Knight, who had co-starred with the Boys in BABES IN TOYLAND. Perhaps the most ignominious claim to fame is that THE BOHEMIAN GIRL was the last film of Roach star Thelma Todd.

During production she was found dead of carbon monoxide poisoning in her garage. While ruled a suicide, most of her friends believed she was murdered by either Lucky Luciano or her ex-husband Pat Dickey. Regardless, her death caused the entire screenplay to be revised and Todd makes what amounts to a cameo performing Nat Shilkret's "Heart of a Gypsy".



Parade this Tuesday!
Next meeting: Sunday, August 6th



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - AUGUST 6TH, 2017

LA VIDA NOCTURNA

1930 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Three Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Linda Loredo, Symona Boniface, Charlie Hall, Baldwin Cooke, Jean de Briac, Dick Gilbert, Tiny Sandford. Once again, by virtue of a special Digital Presentation, we are able to share one of Laurel and Hardy's rare foreign language versions of one of their most popular shorts. This Spanish edition of BLOTTO was filmed with an alternate cast, although Stan's wife, Linda Loredo, also appeared in English language films and played Stan's wife in American-only short COME CLEAN. As with most of the foreign versions, this Spanish BLOTTO is expanded and includes an exotic dance sequence not seen in the U.S. version. The still on the right shows Stan's three BLOTTO wives - Anita Garvin (US), Linda Loredo (Spanish) and Georgette Rhodes (German).



THE CRAZY WORLD OF LAUREL AND HARDY

1967 Jay Ward Productions - Joseph Brenner Assoc. 87 minutes. Written By Bill Scott. Produced by Hal Roach and Raymond Rohauer. Music by Jerry Fielding. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy. Narrated by Garry Moore.



THE CRAZY WORLD OF LAUREL AND HARDY stands alone among the myriad compilations of comedy classics in that it is the lone feature that is made up almost entirely of sequences from the Boys talking pictures. With the exception of a lengthy excerpt from BACON GRABBERS, all of the scenes in the film are from Stan and Ollie's post-silent period. Jay Ward Productions (ROCKY AND BULLWINKLE) and notorious packager-rights collector Raymond Rohauer apparently obtained only limited licensing for the material from Hal Roach because, outside of single showing on Showtime Cable in the late 1980's, the film has never been revived following its original release in 1967. CRAZY WORLD originally played on a double bill with THE BEST OF W.C. FIELDS, which was a mere stringing together of the Great Man's Mack Sennett two-reelers into an 80 minute program. But THE CRAZY WORLD OF LAUREL AND HARDY was a more ambitious effort, with commentary written by Bill Scott and narration provided by television icon Garry Moore (himself a dead-ringer for Buster Keaton). The musical score was by Jerry Fielding, a fine composer who was very busy in both theatrical films and television (he wrote the themes for PERRY MASON, THE BULLWINKLE SHOW and HOGAN'S HEROES). While purists are never satisfied with the re-editing and re-sequencing of the Boys' original films, this feature gave new audiences terrific exposure to the very best of Stan and Ollie.

The version we are showing this afternoon is a complete reconstruction of the original visual portion of the film. All of the scenes have been inserted from new digital transfers, with the original optical transitions replicated, and the original 1967 feature soundtrack restored. THE CRAZY WORLD OF LAUREL AND HARDY has almost completely vanished from the scene. Had not a chance betamax recording survived from that lone cable airing of a generation ago we would not be able to present this newly minted edition. Enjoy!

Next meeting: Sunday, September 10th

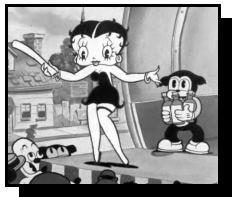


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program September 10th 2017

LIBERTY

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Tom Kennedy, Sam Lufkin, James Finlayson, Harry Bernard. One of the iconic Laurel and Hardy shorts has the Boys as escaped convicts doing their best to keep one step ahead of the cops. Unfortunately, those steps take them to higher elevation than they could possibly have dreamed! And, yes, director Leo McCarey is the same chap who went on to direct GOING MY WAY.



BETTY BOOP, M.D.

1932 Max Fleischer - Paramount One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of Mae Questel and William Costello. You may actually need an M.D. after you see this bizarre cartoon by the weed-taking animators at Fleischer Studios. Bimbo and Koko, with the aid of lovely Betty, are hawking their patent nostrum Jippo. One drop and the town goes wild. No plot, just outrageous gags. Billy Costello, who does the voice of Bimbo, was the original Popeye before Jack Mercer's longtime reign as the spinach-eating sailor.

HELPMATES

1932 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Blanche Payson, Bobby Callahan, Robert "Bobby" Burns. One of the great Laurel and Hardy comedies. Ollie is recovering from having thrown a wild party when he gets word that "the wife" is expected home unexpectedly! Ollie gets Stan to come over and help clean things up. That's really all you need to know. Except to say that this is yet another example of the simplest of ideas being developed to the hilt and garnished with snappy ginger. Lots of wit, surprise, anticipation and, eventually, pity (we wouldn't dare suggest pathos!). Maybe next year we'll have a "Meet Me in the Round House" Contest!



SCHOOL'S OUT

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Robert McGowan. With Jackie Cooper, Mary Ann Jackson, Chubby Chaney, Dorothy DeBorba, Farina Hoskins, Donald Haines, Wheezer Hutchins, June Marlowe, Creighton Hale. Here's our favorite Gang with our favorite school teacher, Miss Crabtree. How such a lovely creature as June Marlowe got saddled with a name like Crabtree is a question that has puzzled movie fans for generations. Anyway, the Gang fears Miss Crabtree is going to leave them and get married. So they go into action to prevent such a catastrophe.

ME AND MY PAL

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Marion Bardell, James Finlayson, Frank Terry, Eddie Dunn, Bobby Dunne, James C. Morton, Eddie Baker, Charles McMurphy, voice of Billy Bletcher. Finally, we bring our First Ever Me & My Pal Jigsaw Puzzle Tournament screening to an end with the film that inspired the challenge. Ollie, ensconced in high society, is about to get married to the daughter of an oil magnate. Stan brings him a wedding present - a jigsaw puzzle (so Ollie will have something to do at night!!). Naturally, Stan has to try it out and before you know it Ollie's life is in pieces. This is a wonderful example of a single simple idea growing into a mini-armageddon.



NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 8TH



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program - March 4th, 2018

THEM THAR HILLS

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert, Mae Busch, Charlie Hall, Dick Alexander, Bobby Dunn, Sam Lufkin, Eddie Baker. It's becoming an occasional tradition - once again we open our new season with the Tent's Laurel and Hardy titlesake. Thanks to his propensity to overindulge, Ollie is ordered by Dr. Gilbert to take a trip up into the mountains where, of course, things happen! In addition to the antique charmer "The Old Spinning Wheel", Marvin Hatley's "I Wake Up With A Song" is heard on the soundtrack in this classic short. And Tent members will see right away why Mae Busch and Charlie Hall are part of our regular ceremonial proceedings.



PIGS IS PIGS

1937 Leon Schlesinger - Warner Bros. One Reel Directed by Isadore Freleng With the voices of Billy Bletcher, Bernice Hansen, Martha Wentworth. Maybe we should have saved this one for Halloween. A pretty hair-raising tale (pig tail?) about a little piggie who is just that. Unfortunately, his gluttony gets the best of him in a harrowing way!

THE TREE IN A TEST TUBE

1942 U.S. Department of Agriculture One Reel Directed by Charles McDonald. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy. Narrated by a Smith named Pete. This was the second and last Laurel and Hardy movie filmed in color (the first being THE ROGUE SONG in 1930). This informational short, photographed on Kodachrome film with a 16mm silent camera, was made during a lunch break at 20th Century-Fox on November 29, 1941, while they were preparing their 2nd feature for the studio, A-HAUNTING WE WILL GO. The print in the Them Thar Hills collection came from the Department of Agriculture and is very rare in that it is the full-length ten minute short. Most extant prints are dups that only include the five minute Laurel and Hardy section.



THE PAWNSHOP

1916 Lone Star - Mutual Two Reels Directed by Charlie Chaplin.

With Charlie Chaplin, Edna Purviance, Henry Bergman, Albert Austin, Eric Campbell, Charlotte Mineau, Wesley Ruggles, James T. Kelly. THE PAWNSHOP fell right in the middle of Chaplin's historic time at Mutual and was the 6th of 12 shorts he made at the studio. Our print features the Winston Sharples soundtrack, synchronized by Gene Rodemich, prepared for the film's 1933 reissue by Van Beuren-RKO.

THE LAUREL-HARDY MURDER CASE

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott. Written by H.M. Walker. Photographed by George Stevens. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Fred Kelsey, Frank Austin, Del Henderson, Stanley Blystone, Bobby Burns, Rosa Gore, Dorothy Granger, Art Rowlands, Tiny Sandford. We last visited with this old dark house comedy back in 2012. Spotting a newspaper notice that Stan's uncle has passed away and left a fortune to his heirs, the Boys decide to attend the reading of the will and see if nephew has any loose millions coming to him. Turns out the notice was a police trap to try and entice uncle's murderer to return to the scene of the crime. And with that setup, we're in for a half hour of shrieks and howls with some hilarious word play thrown in for good measure.



Next Meeting - Sunday, April 8th

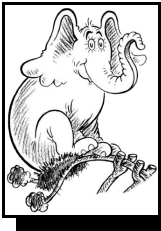


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program - April 8th, 2018

FLYING ELEPHANTS

1928 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels Directed by Frank Butler. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Edna Marion, Dorothy Coburn, Viola Richard, Tiny Sandford, Leo Willis. Our Pacyderm Parade begins with this Laurel and Hardy silent short that is so primitive it's pre-historic - literally! The Boys are neanderthals in the days before civilization. Yet the age-old conflict still abounds and Stan and Ollie are no exception to love's eternal conflicts. A total burlesque.



HORTON HATCHES THE EGG

1942 Leon Schlesinger - Warner Bros. One Reel Directed by Robert Clampett. Music by Carl Stalling. With the voices of Kent Rogers, Bernice Hanson, Mel Blanc. Narrated by Frank Graham. One of the greatest one-shot cartoons to come out of Termite Terrace, HORTON HATCHES THE EGG is based on the 1940 children's book by Theodore "Dr. Seuss" Geisel. The film operates on levels accessible to both kids and adults. Geisel, who worked with Bob Clampett on the cartoon, stayed on at the Terrace to write the Private Snafu cartoons for the Army-Navy Screen Magazine.

"Zenobia"

1939 Hal Roach - United Artists 70 minutes. Directed by Gordon Douglas. With Oliver Hardy, Harry Langdon, Billie Burke, Alice Brady, Jean Parker, James Ellison, June Lang, Stepin Fetchit, Hattie McDaniel, Philip Hurlic, Olin Howlin, J. Farrell MacDonald, Hobart Cavanaugh, Clem Bevans, Robert Dudley, Chester Conklin, Jack George, Mary Kornman, Edward McWade, Hall Johnson Choir.

In 1938 the Hollywood press reported that Stan Laurel's contract had been cancelled and that Oliver Hardy would be starring in a feature picture with Harry Langdon. The film went into production as IT'S SPRING AGAIN, based on H. C. Bunner's 1891 short story "Zenobia's Infidelity", first published in the Bunner compendium SHORT SIXES and which later appeared in the May 1925 issue of Golden Book Magazine. The screen story was set in post-war Mississippi and was elegantly set and dressed. Co-starring as Hardy's wife was Billie Burke, who had appeared in TOPPER and TOPPER TAKES A TRIP for Hal Roach. The story was expanded to focus on Hardy's daughter who is in love with a scion of society. In addition to Ollie and Harry Langdon, comedy chores were in the hands of Stepin Fetchit, a black comedian who was a screen favorite after having appeared in several pictures with the late Will Rogers. In fact, ZENOBIA has very much the feel of Rogers' whimsical films of the early thirties. Also on hand is Hattie McDaniel, having recently completed her role as "Mammy" in GONE WITH THE WIND; and Philip Hurlic, who had made a fine showing in THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER. The scene in which Hurlic learns a valuable lesson about America is one of the highlights of ZENOBIA.



While ZENOBIA is a noble diversion, movie fans were delighted to learn that Laurel and Hardy would soon be back together in an independent feature, THE FLYING DEUCES. And, with new contract stipulations, Stan re-signed with Hal Roach and he and Babe made two final films for their home studio before finding themselves as indentured servants at 20th Century-Fox.

Next Meeting - Sunday, May 20th



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

FILM PROGRAM - MAY 20TH, 2018

DOUBLE WHOOPIE

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lewis R. Foster. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Jean Harlow, Tiny Sandford, Charlie Hall, Rolfe Sedan, Charley Rogers, William Gillespie, Hans Joby, Sam Lufkin. Aside from being a very funny Laurel and Hardy comedy, this film will enjoy everlasting fame as the one that introduced "Jeannie Weanie" in all her swanky elegance. Harlow had had several bit parts, but none that showcased her in such a glamorous - and gam-erous! - manner. The Prince is played by Hans Joby and is an obvious take off on the persona of popular actor and director Erich von Stroheim. This special edition of DOUBLE WHOOPIE was produced by Sons founders Al Kilgore and Chuck McCann, as well as music historian Miles Kreuger. The voices for Stan and Babe were both done by Chuck, who often impersonated Ollie with Jim MacGeorge as Stan. We are presenting this special edition as a tribute to Chuck, who passed away last month at age 83.



PORKY'S PREVIEW

1941 Leon Schlesinger-Warner Bros. One Reel Directed by Fred "Tex" Avery. Porky decides to take a stab at making his own cartoons. The result is a hilarious stick-figure fiasco.

NOW WE'LL TELL ONE

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Directed by James Parrott. With Charley Chase, Muriel Evans, Lillian Elliott, Frank Darien, Gale Henry, Eddie Baker, Baldwin Cooke, Billy Franey, Elinor Vanderveer, Major Sam Harris. A rather bizarre short for Charley Chase as he wears a new invention - a belt that changes the wearer's personality! Here are two theater-owner comments:

NOW WE'LL TELL ONE: Charlie Chase—Charlie wears a belt in this one which endows him with characteristics not his own—classical dancer, prize fighter, sheik, etc. Not bad. My patrons like to have Charlie sing and dance.—Mrs. Howard Maylor, Oak Harbor Theatre, Oak Harbor, Wash. General patronage.

NOW WE'LL TELL ONE: Charley Chase—A Charley Chase comedy that went over big. Chase is liked here. I can't see why, but he gets the laughs. Running time, two reels.—Gladys E. McArdle, Owl Theatre, Lebanon, Kansas. Small town patronage.



BEAU HUNKS

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Four Reels Directed by James Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charles Middleton, Harry Schultz, Broderick O'Farrell, Dick Gilbert, Charlie Hall, Leo Willis, Tiny Sandford, "Abdul Kasim K'Horne". Hal Roach began his program of "streamliners" in 1940, but this was an early four-reel featurette that, in 1931, exhibitors found difficulty fitting into their schedules. Nevertheless, it's a well-paced comedy with Ollie dragging Stan with him to join the Foreign Legion. For years, it was assumed that this picture was a satire on the Ronald Colman classic BEAU GESTE. But, in fact, it is a direct take-off on that picture's sequel, BEAU IDEAL, with many of the original's sequences burlesqued. Both novels were written by Percival Christopher Wren and the Hal Roach gag writers had a field day poking fun at the grim set-pieces in the Wren original. Co-starring as the Commandant is Charles Middleton, who movie fans will recognize (at least his rich voice) as Ming the Merciless from the Flash Gordon serials. Laurel and Hardy would do another hitch in the Foreign Legion eight years later in the Boris Morros-RKO production THE FLYING DEUCES, again with Mr. Middleton appearing as the much-aggravated commanding officer.

NEXT MEETING - JUNE 10TH



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - July 1st, 2018

Fra Diavolo

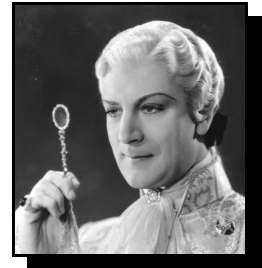
1933 Hal Roach-MGM 88 minutes. Directed by Hal Roach and Charles R. Rogers. Musical Direction by Leroy Shield.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Dennis King, Thelma Todd, James Finlayson, Arthur Pierson, Lucille Brown, Henry Armetta, James C. Morton, Lane Chandler, Tiny Sanford, Wilfred Lucas, Walter Plinge, Leo White, Rolfe Sedan, Louise Carver, Dick Gilbert, John Qualen, Walter Long.



Laurel and Hardy star in their first of three costume pictures based upon famous operas and operettas (although they had appeared in supporting roles in MGM's original operetta, THE ROGUE SONG). Daniel Auber's comic opera "Fra Diavolo" was the basis for this film, originally released in 1933 as THE DEVIL'S BROTHER (Tonight's print is from the Canadian release, retitled and with altered billing).

Structurally, FRA DIAVOLO is the most linear of the Boys' three costume pictures and was very much the inspiration for RKO's buffoonery of the following season, COCKEYED CAVALIERS starring Bert Wheeler and Robert Woolsey. The screen adaptation is reasonably faithful to the original libretto of FRA DIAVOLO. Dennis King, famous operetta star, cut a commanding figure in the role of Diavolo, alias the Marquis De San Marco. And he offered a superb musical contribution to the proceedings. In fact, this is one of King's few musical film appearances. His stirring rendition of Diavolo's "call" is doubly pleasing as the bandit character does not sing it in the original opera.



One of the most enticing features of FRA DIAVOLO is the presence of Thelma Todd. Todd was not only a glamour queen but was also, as demonstrated here, a classic farceur. Seeing her ample talents on display in FRA DIAVOLO reminds us of the pitiable loss moviegoers suffered upon her tragic early death. Some trivia - Diavolo's nemesis, Lorenzo, is played by Arthur Pierson. Pierson would act in films for a couple of more years and then move behind the camera as a producer and director in features and television, including several years at Hanna-Barbera. The bandit behind the bad teeth is none other than Wilfred Lucas, who had recently played the Warden in PARDON US and would later appear as Dean Williams in A CHUMP AT OXFORD. Lucas' makeup was so disguising that most reference books list his appearance as being "deleted!"

For many years, THE DEVIL'S BROTHER was completely absent from public viewing (except for crudely-edited abridgements) as ownership had been retained by MGM and they did not license the film to television. However, in the 1980's it was finally shown on cable and was subsequently released on video tape, laser disc and DVD.

ELLENVILLE PARADE - WEDNESDAY, JULY 4TH
PLEASE JOIN IN THE FUN

Next Month: Sunday, August 5th, 2018
"August at the Augustines"



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

DIGITAL PROGRAM - AUGUST 5TH, 2018

WHITE WINGS

1923 Hal Roach - Pathé Industries One Reel. Directed by George Jeske. With Stan Laurel, James Finlayson, Marvin Loback, Katherine Grant, Mark Jones, George Rowe, William Gillespie. Stan was well-established by 1923 and had moved from Joe Rock to Hal Roach Studios. Here he plays a street cleaner who, thanks to his white ducks, is able to successfully (?) impersonate a dentist! Finn appeared in quite a few of Stan's silent shorts.

HOLLYWOOD PARTY

1937 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Two Reels. Photographed in Technicolor. Directed by Roy Roland. With Elissa Landi, Joe Morrison, Leon Errol, Charley Chase, Freddie Bartholomew, Joan Bennett, Joe E. Brown, Clark Gable, Jack Good, Leon Janney, Sunnie O'Dea, Betty Ann Rhodes, Anna May Wong. This was one of many all-star shorts made (primarily) by Warner Bros. and MGM to show off the new Technicolor process - and the studios' talent roster - to movie fans. Charley Chase appears just in time for the end of his contract with Roach-MGM and his new association with Columbia.

LOS CALAVERAS

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Six Reels. Directed by James W. Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlie Hall, Anita Garvin, Linda Loredó, Charles Dorety, Luis Llana. One of the lengthier of the expanded-for-foreign-markets Laurel & Hardy shorts. LOS CALAVERAS is basically a combination of BE BIG and LAUGHING GRAVY, both of which are adapted and filmed with Spanish dialogue. The LAUGHING GRAVY section takes a radical turn from the American version. In the original, Charlie Hall's hotel is quarantined and the landlord takes the ultimate escape from the prospect of being cooped up with his worst tenants. In the foreign versions, Stan receives word that he can inherit a fortune under certain circumstances which causes conflict between Ollie and himself. By the way, while Anita Garvin and Linda Loredó are heard with their own voices speaking Spanish in LOS CALAVERAS, Charlie Hall's voice is dubbed.

Also on the program is some rare late 40's - early 50's Pathé Newsreel footage of Stan and Ollie.

Next Month: Sunday, September 2nd, 2018



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - SEPTEMBER 16, 2018

THICKER THAN WATER

1935 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels. Directed by James W. Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Daphne Pollard, James Finlayson, Harry Bowen, Grace Goodall, Lester Dorr, Allan Caveness, Bess Flowers. Stan and Ollie appear in their final short subject for Hal Roach. This is an interesting short in many regards. First, as one of the Boys' "domestic" shorts, they appear in a decidedly middle class setting similar to that of SONS OF THE DESERT. Also, Ollie's wife is played by Daphne Pollard, who would play Mrs. Hardy again in their next domestic feature OUR RELATIONS. Second, the auction sequence was repeated nine years later in Laurel and Hardy's Fox feature THE DANCING MASTERS. Third, extra money was spent on the short for humorous optical effects. Finally, the short features one of Stan and Ollie's bizarre finales, others of which included GOING BYE BYE, THE LIVE GHOST, THE BOHEMIAN GIRL and THE BULL FIGHTERS. By the way, the woman who plays the anxious nurse is played by Bess Flowers, who would come to be known as Queen of the Extras. Between 1923 and 1964 Bess made over 900 *known* appearances in motion pictures and television programs including her role as Stan's wife in the Boys' 1928 two-reeler WE FAW DOWN.



BIMBO'S INITIATION

1931 Max Fleischer-Paramount One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of Billy Murray, Mae Questel and William Pennell. This is one of the more bizarre toons from the weed-toking animators at New York's Fleischer Studios. To the strains of Byron Gay's "The Vamp", Bimbo is asked "Wanna be a member?" and his negative reply begins a nightmarish escapade 'neath city streets. This was Mae Questel's second "appearance" as the voice of Betty Boop, having taken over the character for SILLY SCANDALS. Here she still has her dog ears (she was, after all, Bimbo's sweetheart) but by 1932 and MINNIE THE MOOCHER they would be replaced by loop earrings.).

NEVER GIVE A SUCKER AN EVEN BREAK

1941 Universal 71 minutes Directed by Eddie Cline. With W. C. Fields, Gloria Jean, Leon Errol, Franklin Pangborn, Butch and Buddy, Anne Nagel, Jody Gilbert, Margaret Dumont, Susan Miller, Charles Lang, Leon Belasco, Dave Willock, Tiny Lipson, Mona Barie, Irving Bacon, Minerva Urecal, Claude Allister, Frank Austin, Charles MacMurphy, Bill Wolfe, Dave Sharpe.

With THE BANK DICK in 1940, W. C. Fields had established himself the primo provider of bizarre, carefree comedy. Fields wrote most of his original stories, probably while under the influence. This one, filmed under the title "The Great Man", was penned by "Otis Cribblecoblis" and it took quite a bit of trimming to get the film down to fighting weight. Originally, a tragic subplot featuring Anne Nagel as Gloria Jean's mother was part of the story but because the rest of the picture was so completely unbelievable it was decided to eliminate that intrusion into the world of pathos. This was Field's last starring vehicle. His final film appearances were guest shots, including a complete sequence - entirely deleted from the release version - in Julien Duvivier's TALES OF MANHATTAN. A final word must be said for director Eddie Cline. Cline was one of the original Keystone Kops and he became a well-respected comedy director. His films at Universal - notable for their razor-sharp editing, which included all of Olsen & Johnson's features, three of W.C. Fields' starring vehicles, and several of the Hugh Herbert and Andrews Sisters films - were aces above the other series comedies at the studio. One wonders what wonders may have resulted if Eddie Cline had teamed with Abbott & Costello at Universal.



Next Month: Sunday, October 7th, 2018



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program November 5th, 2017

THAT'S MY WIFE

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Vivien Oakland, William Courtright, Jimmy Aubrey, Charlie Hall, Sam Lufkin. Ollie is married but he has a problem - visitor Stan who doesn't seem like he is in a hurry to leave. So Mrs. Hardy DOES. This leaves Ollie without a wife to show his Uncle Bernal, who is going to leave him his fortune IF Ollie is happily married. Solution - let Stan be Ollie's wife!!



RUSHIN' BALLET

1937 Hal Roach-MGM One Reel Directed by Gordon Douglas. With Spanky McFarland, Alfalfa Switzer, Darla Hood, Darwood Kaye, Buckwheat Thomas, Porky Lee, Tommy Bond, Sidney Kibrick, Ernie Alexander, Fred Holmes, Kathryn Sheldon. The Hal Roach Our Gang series was beginning to wind down. Roach had already moved the kids from two-reelers to one-reelers and after another dozen shorts the series would be sold as a franchise to Metro-

Goldwyn-Mayer. With former "Boyfriends" series regular Gordon Douglas now directing, the films were on an economical track and would wind up in the financial black for Roach. And while it pales in comparison to the vintage silent and early talkie classics, RUSHIN' BALLET is still leagues ahead in the production and laugh department when compared to the sorry, saccharine shorts that MGM would produce beginning in 1938.

ALL AMERICAN CO-ED

1941 Hal Roach-United Artists 53 minutes Directed by Leroy Prinz. With Johnny Downs, Frances Langford, Marjorie Woodworth, Noah Beery Jr., Alan Hale Jr., Esther Dale, Harry Langdon, Kent Rogers, Allan Lane, Joe Brown Jr., Lillian Randolph, Tanner Sisters, Elyse Knox, Lorraine Miller, Frank O'Connor, Marie Windsor, and Dudley Dickerson. Okay, our Dudes in Drag fest continues with this Hal Roach streamliner starring one of the original silent Our Gang kids, Johnny Downs. Johnny was an amiable entertainer and a fine dancer whose career never really took off. There are a bunch of offspring in this picture including the sons of Noah Beery, Alan Hale and Joe E. Brown. Beery and Hale appear as Roach's latest comedy duo. The plot is paper thin but the site of wonderful Dudley Dickerson cutting the rug is alone worth the price of admission.



TWICE TWO

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Baldwin Cooke, Charlie Hall, voices of May Wallace and Carol Tevis. Making its THEM THAR HILLS Tent premiere, TWICE TWO is pretty much a one-joke affair with an inventive premise that pays off more in characterization than in scenario. Perhaps the funniest thing of all is the idea that Ollie is a brain surgeon! Nevertheless, Stan and Babe playing each other's wives is a real treat, though one might wonder if it was always planned to have their voices dubbed by Tevis (Stan) and Wallace (Ollie). In any case, TWICE TWO is ample proof that transgender comedy was alive and well in the thirties.

Have a Happy Holiday Season!
See you in 2018!



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program - April 7th, 2019

WE FAW DOWN

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Kay Deslys, Vivien Oakland, Bess Flowers, Vera White. We're pleased to present our premiere showing of this classic silent short. WE FAW DOWN is one of the Boys' domestic shorts and features Ollie feigning illness so that he and Stan can sneak out to a poker game. Unfortunately, they are picked up by two rather flirtatious women and things go seriously downhill from there. The story was the eventual inspiration for SONS OF THE DESERT and the finale to this short would be used in a later feature film.



ON THE LOOSE

1931 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Produced and Directed by Hal Roach. With Thelma Todd, Zasu Pitts, John Loder, Claud Allister, Billy Gilbert, Gordon Douglas, Otto Fries, Charlie Hall, Two Familiar Suitors. A very fun entry in the Todd-Pitts series with Thelma and Zasu disgusted by their constant parade of gentlemen friends who think a "big time" is a trip to Coney Island. British leading man John Loder (Hitchcock's SABOTAGE) makes a rare appearance in a comedy two-reeler and the film has some other welcome surprises as well. By the way, the Coney Island scenes were shot at the Venice Amusement Pier, which also served as the locale for the Our Gang classic FISH HOOKY.



BLOCK-HEADS

1938 Hal Roach-MGM 58 minutes. Directed by John G. Blystone. Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Minna Gombell, Patricia Ellis, Billy Gilbert, James Finlayson, Patsy Moran, Henry Hall, Sam Lufkin, William Royle, James C. Morton, Harry Woods, Tommy Bond, Jean Del Val. Once again, the boys are in uniform for Uncle Sam. At the tail end of the Great War, Stan is ordered to remain at his post in the trenches "until relieved from duty". Need we say more?? This film is an expanded remake of the Boys' first talking picture, UNACCUSTOMED AS WE ARE. It would be the last film in which they would co-star with the great Billy Gilbert. Sam Lufkin, who played the hapless homeowner in THE FINISHING TOUCH, returns here with his best-remembered line: "Come on lug, get outta that chair!" Structurally, the film is unique in that, after the first reel, the remainder of the film takes place in one time period. Not so uncommon for short, but rare for a feature-length picture. BLOCK-HEADS also boasts a wonderful original score by Marvin Hatley and it is the second Laurel & Hardy feature to be nominated for an Academy Award for Best Musical Score. The previous nominee was WAY OUT WEST, also by Hatley. One of the screenwriters of BLOCK-HEADS, Felix Adler, had in the script an entirely different ending for the picture involving big game hunter Billy Gilbert's trophy wall. However, Hal Roach thought the idea too gruesome and Adler subsequently used it as the finale of a Three Stooges short, I'LL NEVER HEIL AGAIN.



Next Meeting: Sunday, May 5th, 2019

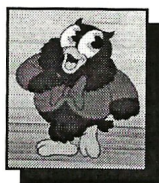


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program - May 5th, 2019

ANGORA LOVE

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lewis R. Foster. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, Charlie Hall, Harry Bernard. This might be looked at as a silent precursor to the Boys' talkie short LAUGHING GRAVY. Stan and Ollie adopt a wayward goat and try to keep it a secret from their slow-burning landlord. ANGORA LOVE was filmed in March of 1929 but was shelved in favor of several talking shorts Hal Roach would produce with Laurel & Hardy. It would eventually be released, their last silent short, in December of 1929.

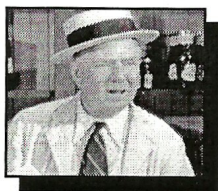


I LOVE TO SING-A

1936 Leon Schlesinger-Warner Bros. One Reel. Directed by Fred Avery. With the voices of Billy Blletcher, Johnnie "Scat" Davis, Bernice Hansen, Joe Daugherty. This is one of the most beloved cartoons to come out of Termie Terrace. The title song is from Al Jolson's 1936 Warner Bros. feature THE SINGING KID and the cartoon is a send-up of THE JAZZ SINGER.

REUNION IN RHYTHM

1937 Hal Roach-MGM One Reel. Directed by Gordon Douglas. With Spanky McFarland, Alfalfa Switzer, Darla Hood, Porky Lee, Buckwheat Thomas, and Rosina Lawrence. This was one of the later Hal Roach Our Gang shorts and was, in fact, a reunion. Back on screen were silent "Rascals" Mary Kornman, Joe Cobb and Mickey Daniels; and early talking Gang member Stymie Beard. Making the first of two Our Gang appearances, in a duet with Alfalfa, was Georgie Jean Larue.

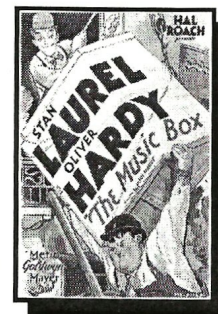


THE PHARMACIST

1933 Mack Sennett-Paramount Two Reels Directed by Arthur Ripley. With W.C. Fields, Elise Cavana, Babe Kane, Grady Sutton, Lorena Carr, Julia Griffith, Si Jenks, Arthur Thalasso. This is the third of Field's quartet of shorts made for Mack Sennett while under contract to Paramount. It is somewhat of a dress rehearsal for the next year's IT'S A GIFT, which is one of the great vaudevilian's cinema classics. The pacing here is often painfully deliberate and Fields' set-upon (at work and at home) tragedian was the everyman of the Depression.

THE MUSIC BOX

1932 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert, Sam Lufkin, Charlie Hall, Gladys Gale, William Gillespie, Lilyan Irene. This one's a perennial and for good reason. THE MUSIC BOX is the only Laurel and Hardy film to win an Academy Award (Best Live Action Short Subject of 1932). Three-reelers are usually problematic but this one is paced perfectly, never allowing the audience to question its extra length. The scenario features a superb blend of verbal and visual gags, punctuated by the great Billy Gilbert's over-the-top portrayal of the unhappy recipient of the title item. For those of you who are just beginning to get familiar with some of the lower-tier players, you might recall Sam Lufkin, who plays the cop in this short, as the bullying veteran ("Come on lug, get outta that chair!") in BLOCK-HEADS. Lufkin appeared in scores of Hal Roach shorts, occasionally benign, but more often accosting the protagonists. Billy Gilbert was a star in his own right and had a long career as a comey player in shorts and features (most notably in Howard Hawks' HIS GIRL FRIDAY). By the way, the tune played by 'the music box' at the opening of the picture is "The King's Men" by Noel Gay and Harry Graham.



Next Meeting: Sunday, June 2nd, 2019

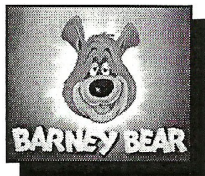
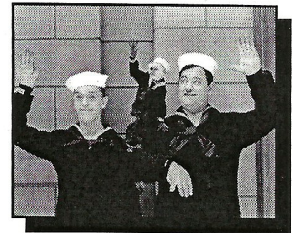


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - June 2nd, 2019

TWO TARS

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, James Finlayson, Charlie Hall, Thelma Hill, Ruby Blaine, Edgar Dearing, Harry Bernard, Jack Hill, Sam Lufkin, Thomas Benton Roberts. This is one of the final entries in the Laurel and Hardy series of silent two-reelers. The following year Stan and Babe would embark on their trek through talkie land. As for TWO TARS, it remains an outstanding film comedy, one of the very best of the silent era. Stan and Ollie, gobs on leave, pick up a couple of skirts and head for the highways only to be waylaid by a massive traffic jam. Tempers and temperatures rise at exponential levels until riots ensue and cycle cop Edgar Dearing attempts to take charge. The Roach Studios property department went into overdrive on this one, creating and modifying dozens of tin lizzies for the climactic chaos.



THE ROOKIE BEAR

1941 MGM One Reel Directed by Rudolf Ising. This is one of the earliest of MGM's Barney Bear cartoons. The character was originally designed as a Wallace Beery take-off and the series ran from 1939 to 1945. Then, in 1948, the character was revived in a slightly more streamlined design and appeared for another six years until 1954. This is vintage Barney, however, and the animation is particularly fluid and detailed.

GREAT GUNS

1941 20th Century-Fox 74 minutes Directed by Monty Banks. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Sheila Ryan, Dick Nelson, Edmund MacDonald, Charles Trowbridge, Ludwig Stossel, Kane Richmond, Mae Marsh, Ethel Griffies, Paul Harvey, Charles Arnt, Pierre Watkin, Russell Hicks, Irving Bacon, Billy Benedict, James Flavin, William Forrest, Harold Goodwin, Bud Geary, Leroy Mason, Walter Sande, Max Wagner, Dave Willock, Billy Wayne. GREAT GUNS was the first film Stan and Babe made under their new contract with 20th Century-Fox and was one of many army comedies churned out by the studios in peacetime 1941 beginning with Universal's BUCK PRIVATES, released in January. Working in the Sol Wurtzel unit (*"things have gone from bad to Wurtzel!"*), the atmosphere was considerably more formal and departmentalized than at the familial Roach studio. Written by staff writer Lou Breslow, GREAT GUNS is a pretty standard army comedy with a few burlesque chestnuts thrown in masquerading as Laurel and Hardy routines. Fortunately, the Boys are eager to please in their first new big studio production and they are in top form, benefitting too from the direction of former silent daredevil comedian Monty Banks. The cast is filled with familiar faces but, alas, none of the Roach boys and girls. All in all, it's a painless and instructive hour-and-a-quarter and, more importantly, it was a morale booster for the many thousands of young men affected by the recently-passed Selective Training and Service Act. Just two short months after the picture's release America would be at war and comedians like Laurel and Hardy, Bob Hope, Abbott and Costello and many others would be needed more than ever to keep our spirits up during the Country's greatest crisis.



ALL MEMBERS URGED TO MARCH in the Ellenville July 4th Parade!!

Next Meeting: Sunday, July 7th, 2019



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - July 7th, 2019

DIGITAL RARITIES

SHORT KILTS

1924 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels Directed by George Jeske. With Stan Laurel, James Finlayson, Mickey Daniels, Ena Gregory, Mary Kornman, Leo Willis, Sammy Brooks, Helen Gilmore, Patsy O'Byrne. Leo McCarey was assistant director on this Stan Laurel solo short. It's a Scottish clan version of the Hatfields vs. the McCoys.

WAX WORKS

1934 Walter Lantz-Universal. One Reel Directed by Walter Lantz. With the voice of Bernice Hanson. One of the early Lantz cartoons made for Universal.

Beer and Pretzels

1933 MGM Two Reels Directed by Jack Cummings. With Ted Healy, Moe Howard, Larry Fine, Jerry Howard, Bonnie Bonnell, Edward Brophy, The Three Ambassadors, Fred Malatesta, Jack Smith. This was one of a half-dozen shorts that The Three Stooges appeared in at MGM with their original mentor Ted Healy. Refusing to admit the Stooges were his bread and butter, Healy signed a solo contract with Metro and the Stooges went on to a 20 year career in shorts at Columbia. While Healy languished at MGM, he finally made a hit at Warner Bros. In HOLLYWOOD HOTEL, only to be beaten to death the night of his son's birth (after an evening of heavy drinking and belligerent behavior) shortly before the film's release. Healy's wife and widow, Betty Healy, played Stan's wife in OUR RELATIONS.

BOOGIE WOOGIE MAN WILL GET YOU IF YOU DON'T WATCH OUT

1943 Walter Lantz-Universal One Reel Directed by James Culhane. With the voices of the Lew Mel Morgan Trio. One of innumerable Swing Symphony "cartunes" made by Walter Lantz during the 1940's.

LADRONES

1930 Hal Roach - MGM Four Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, James Finlayson, Bob O'Connor. LADRONES is the Spanish-language version of Laurel and Hardy's 1930 two-reeler NIGHT OWLS. The film has extended sequences as the foreign markets required longer running times for their short subjects. LADRONES is especially delightful since not only Stan and Babe speak their own lines in Spanish, but the same is also done by Kennedy and Finlayson. Bob O'Connor, who plays the desk sergeant in this version, was also dialogue supervisor (seen in photo explaining things to the Boys). O'Connor, despite his Irish name (born Robert O'Connor), was born in Mexico and usually played Latin roles.



Next Meeting: Sunday, August 4th, 2019

"August at the Augustines!"



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program - August 4th, 2019



LEAVE 'EM LAUGHING

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Clyde Bruckman. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, Otto Fries, Dorothy Coburn, Sam Lufkin, Edgar Dearing. An archtypical Laurel and Hardy silent short with the basic premise being that Stan has a toothache. A trip to the dentist results in several funny bits. The trip FROM the dentist includes a laughing sequence that cameraman George Stevens later repeated when he directed the Astaire-Rogers classic SWING TIME. Otto Fries, as the dentist, repeated his role when Stan and Ollie re-did the dentist visit in their first feature PARDON US.

SECOND CHILDHOOD

1936 Hal Roach - MGM Two Reels Directed by Gus Meins. With Spanky McFarland, Alfalfa Switzer, Darla Hood, Buckwheat Thomas, Porky Lee, Zeffie Tilbury, Richard Deneut, Sidney Bracey, Greta Gould. One of the best-remembered of the Our Gang Comedies. Zeffie Tilbury (tonight's Gypsy Queen) is an elderly lady who wishes to be left alone to her pills and servants. Enter the gang and her life is turned upside down.



The Bohemian Girl

1936 Hal Roach-MGM 70 minutes Music by Michael Balfe. Musical Direction by Nathaniel Shilkret. Directed by James W. Horne and Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Jacqueline Wells, Thelma Todd, Mae Busch, Antonio Moreno, Darla Hood, James Finlayson, William P. Carleton, Andrea Leeds, Harry Bernard, Harry Bowen, Bob O'Connor, Bobby Dunn, Eddie Borden, Zeffie Tilbury, Mitchell Lewis, James C. Morton, Sam Lufkin, Margaret Mann, Howard Hickman, Dick Gilbert, Lane Chandler.



THE BOHEMIAN GIRL is the third of Laurel and Hardy's starring comic operas (they played supporting roles in the mostly-lost ROGUE SONG) and, like FRA DIAVOLO and BABES IN TOYLAND which preceded it, this one features a justifiably famous score. Composed by Michael Balfe way back in 1843, THE BOHEMIAN GIRL featured a now-routine plot about a royal princess kidnapped by a band of roaming Gypsies. The score, featuring such beloved standards as "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls", "When Other Lips" and "That Grief May Call Its Own" is faithfully represented in the Hal Roach film production. A new song, written for Thelma Todd's character (her voice was dubbed), was "The Heart of a Gypsy" by musical director Nat Shilkret. This was Thelma Todd's last film and, in fact, the picture had to be completely re-written due to her untimely and suspicious death at age 29. The song she interprets on screen is the only footage Roach was able to use in the film. Jacqueline Wells, who plays the grown abductee, is seen singing "Marble Halls", but her voice was dubbed by Rosina Lawrence, who would later co-star with Stan and Ollie in WAY OUT WEST. What THE BOHEMIAN GIRL lacks in a cohesive story it more than makes up for in comedy set-pieces. Laurel and Hardy are in top form and this feature contains some of their funniest sequences. Stan, in particular, shines in a solo bit where he has to bottle a barrel of new wine! The Gypsy who sings "When Other Lips" is Felix Knight, who played Tom-Tom in BABES IN TOYLAND.

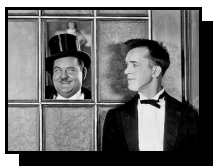
THANK YOU LEE AND RENE!

Next Meeting: Sunday, September 1st, 2019



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - September 1, 2019



EARLY TO BED

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Emmett J. Flynn. With Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy. A rarity in which Laurel and Hardy are the only two actors in the entire short. Ollie inherits a fortune, hires Stanley as his butler and proceeds to drive him crazy with his irresponsible behavior. But Stan can only take so much and, at last, the worm turns!

POPEYE THE SAILOR MEETS SINDBAD THE SAILOR

1936 Max Fleischer - Paramount Two Reels in Color Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of Jack Mercer, Mae Questel, Gus Wickie, Lou Fleischer. This was the first of three Max Fleischer Popeye "specials". Aside from the dazzling scenic design, 3-dimensional "stereoptical" animation and wonderful music score, SINDBAD benefits from Mercer and Wickie's superb adlib mutterings.

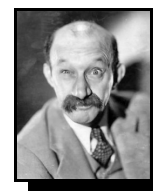


ON THE WRONG TREK

1936 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Chase and Harold Law. With Charley Chase, Rosina Lawrence, Bonita Weber, Clarence Wilson, Harry Bernard, Harry Bowen, Bobby Burns, Lester Dorr, Dick Gilbert, Bud Jamison, Bob Kortman, Charles Sullivan, May Wallace, Harry Wilson, and a couple of surprises. This was Charley Chase's last entry in his short subject series for Hal Roach, who was discontinuing shorts except for Our Gang. Chase appeared in one more film at Roach, KELLY THE SECOND, and then moved to Columbia for a new series of two-reelers. This is a delightful motor-car escapade with Charley and family running into various denizens of the road.

SHOULD HUSBANDS PAY?

1926 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels Directed by L. Richard Jones and Stan Laurel. With James Finlayson, Tyler Brooke, Charlotte Mineau, Martha Sleeper, Vivien Oakland, Anders Randolph, Tiny Sandford, Anita Garvin, Kay Deslys, Lyle Tayo. A flea-market discovery of the complete two-reel version of this hilarious Roach silent classic. Filandering Brooke is kept on a short leash by his lawyer Finn. A little bit of chivalry goes terribly wrong. With a soundtrack produced by Chelsea Rialto Studios.



TOWED IN A HOLE

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by George Marshall. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert. This is one of which we can never tire. With the exception of a very brief appearance by Billy Gilbert, this short belongs entirely to Laurel and Hardy. The set-up is economy personified - fish salesman who decide to catch their own fish. All they need is a boat. Then, for two reels we watch as Stanley sabotages nearly every attempt made by Ollie to get their vessel (from Joe's Junk Yard) seaworthy. One of the greatest two reel comedies ever made.

Next Meeting: Sunday, October 6th, 2019

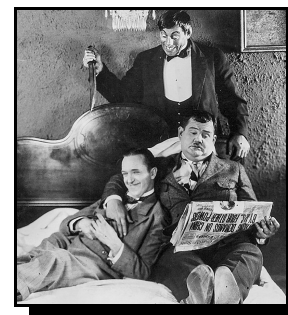


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

FILM PROGRAM - OCTOBER 6, 2019

DO DETECTIVES THINK?

1927 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels Directed by Fred Guiol. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Noah Young, Viola Richard, Frank Brownlee, Will Stanton, Wilson Bengie. This was the first film in which Laurel and Hardy appeared as a team wearing their customary hats. The bowler style is a bit prototypical here but essentially it's their traditional garb. Judge Finlayson sends "The Slasher" to the chair; but he escapes and promises revenge on the jurist. Enter Stan and Ollie as private detectives, assigned to guard and protect the Judge.



THE GREAT PIGGY BANK ROBBERY



1946 Warner Bros. One Reel Directed by Robert Clampett. Music by Carl Stalling. With the voice of Mel Blanc. This is one of the cartoons that was in production at the time Leon Schlesinger retired from making cartoons and his studio, affectionately known as Termite Terrace, was rechristened Warner Bros. Cartoons. The new boss, Edward Selzer, was a man of little humor and no appreciation for the work being done by the animators. Many of the old guard moved on, including Bob Clampett. But Clampett left a couple of gems to be released, including THE BIG SNOOZE and THE GREAT PIGGY BANK ROBBERY.

ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN

1948 Universal-International 83 minutes Directed by Charles T. Barton. With Bud Abbott, Lou Costello, Lon Chaney, Bela Lugosi, Glenn Strange, Lenore Aubert, Jane Randolph, Charles Bradstreet, Frank Ferguson, Howard Negley, Joe Kirk. Our comedy Guest Artist feature this year is one of the great monster romps of all time. Its success is due mainly to the fact that rather than make the monsters "funny", the horror aspects are played completely straight, allowing Bud and Lou to handle the comedy. With outstanding photography by Charles Van Enger (who shot THE WOLF MAN) and an iconic musical score by Frank Skinner (SON OF FRANKENSTEIN), ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN has become a cinema classic and a favorite of many baby boomer filmmakers.



Next Meeting: Sunday, November 10th, 2019

(subject to postponement)



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - November 10, 2019



THEY GO BOOM?

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels

Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlie Hall. This is one of the earliest of the Boys' talking short comedies. Simple in plot and setting, but grandiose in many of the gags devised by Leo McCarey and company. After you see this, go out and have your throat painted!

BABES IN TOYLAND

1934 Hal Roach-MGM 79 minutes

Directed by Gus Meins and Charles Rogers.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlotte Henry, Henry Brandon, Felix Knight, Florence Roberts, William Burress, Kewpie Morgan, Marie Wilson, Billy Bletcher, Tiny Sandford, Tiny Lipson, John George, Angelo Rossitto, Gus Leonard, Jerry Tucker, Gene Reynolds, William Austin. It's becoming a tradition, our Holiday trip to Toyland. Stan and Babe's charming version of Victor Herbert's 1903 operetta was quickly forgotten after its 1934 theatrical release. After buying the property from Hal Roach and then scrapping ideas for a remake, William LeBaron and Boris Morros licensed the film to Robert Lippert who reissued it as MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS. Due to restrictions from the Herbert estate, the original title and opening song were cut and the censors demanded the cave song be eliminated. Some prints had gruesome scenes of the bogeymen cut out. Over the years, MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS became a TV staple at holiday times, recently in a ghastly colorized version. But now we are able to present the MGM uncut original release in all its black-and-white glory (and gory!). BABES IN TOYLAND deserves a place among the greatest of Holiday classics and continues to be celebrated by Sons of the Desert members the world over.



Have a Great Holiday!
We'll See You in March, 2020!



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - March 1, 2020



FROM SOUP TO NUTS

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Edgar Kennedy. Supervising Director Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Anita Garvin, Tiny Sandford, Otto Fries, Sam Lufkin, Elinor Vanderveer. This is a Them Thar Hills premiere. But if it seems familiar to you, it's because FROM SOUP TO NUTS was reworked into the opening two reels of A CHUMP AT OXFORD, with Anita Garvin repeating her role as the party hostess. Stan and Ollie are hired as waiters for the evening at a swanky home.

THE SPINACH ROADSTER

1936 Max Fleischer - Paramount One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of Jack Mercer, Mae Questel, Gus Wickie. Bluto has a new car and is anxious to take Olive for a spin.



UNACCUSTOMED AS WE ARE

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lewis R. Foster. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Edgar Kennedy, Thelma Todd. Unaccustomed as they were...to public speaking, that is, Stan and Ollie let their voices be heard for the first time in this domestic comedy. Ollie brings Stan home for dinner but ball-and-chain Mae will have none of it. An innocent (aren't they always?) entanglement with Mrs. Kennedy (tragic beauty Thelma Todd) leads to eventual destruction and dissolution. This short was remade as the second half of the Boys' 1938 feature BLOCKHEADS. The boys were much more polished then but Minna Gombell as Ollie's wife was no match for Mae Busch!

HAPPY TIMES AND JOLLY MOMENTS

1943 Warner Bros. Two Reels Produced by Gordon Hollingshead. Narrated by Lou Marcelle. With Ben Turpin, Fatty Arbuckle, James Finlayson, Louise Fazenda, Charlie Murray, the Keystone Kops. This was one of Warner Bros.' compilation shorts made up of slapstick moments from Mack Sennett comedies. Don't look for a story, just duck and take cover from the barrage of pies, pratfalls and backfiring tin lizzies!



THE MIDNIGHT PATROL

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Frank Brownlee, Charlie Hall, Frank Terry, Bob Kortman, James C. Morton, Edgar Dearing, Eddie Dunn, Tiny Sandford, voice of Billy Bletcher ("Look out boys.."). One of the Stan and Ollie's funniest outings, from their prime talkie period. A beautiful balance between verbal gags and visual set-pieces. As usual, the deliberate pacing yields big payoffs in the laugh department.

Next Meeting: Sunday, April 5th, 2020

April 2020 - June 2021

PANDEMIC BREAK



THEM THAR HILLS – Oasis 281

Film Program - July 11, 2021

THEM THAR HILLS

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert, Mae Busch, Charlie Hall, Dick Alexander, Bobby Dunn, Sam Lufkin, Eddie Baker. Well, what better way to re-open the Tent than with its Laurel and Hardy namesake. Thanks to his propensity to overindulge, Ollie is ordered by Dr. Gilbert to take a trip up into the mountains where, of course, *things happen!* In addition to the antique charmer "The Old Spinning Wheel", Marvin Hatley's "I Wake Up With A Song" is heard on the soundtrack in this classic short. This was the first of two shorts in which Mae Busch and Charlie Hall played Mr. and Mrs. And their union resulted in being forever part of the Organization's ceremonial toasts.



ALADDIN AND HIS WONDERFUL LAMP

1939 Max Fleischer-Paramount Two Reels

Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of Jack Mercer, Margie Hines, Carl Meyer. This is the third and final two-reel Popeye Special produced by Fleischer Studios. Margie Hines does her best "Zasu Pitts" characterization and Jack Mercer as Popeye has some very witty underbreath utterances.

PUTTING PANTS ON PHILLIP

1927 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Clyde Bruckman. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charles Bachman, Harvey Clark, Sam Lufkin, Jack Hill. Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy had appeared together in a dozen pictures at Hal Roach by the time PUTTING PANTS ON PHILLIP was released as the first official "Laurel and Hardy Comedy". Even so, the boys do not play a team per se and do not appear in their familiar bowler hats. It is very much a character comedy with Stan a randy Scotsman who jumps for joy at the sight of every -and any- girl in Culver City! Ollie tries to preserve his dignity despite the arrival of his flamboyant nephew.



WHEN THE WIND BLOWS

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James W. Horne. With Jackie Cooper, Mary Ann Jackson, Allen "Farina" Hoskins, Wheezer Hutchins, Chubby Chaney, Edgar Kennedy, Charles McAvoy, Mary Gordon, Chet Brandenburg. One of the early talkie Our Gang shorts, this features a rare directorial turn by James Horne (most of the early Rascals shorts were directed by Robert McGowan). The focus is more on the situation than on the kids themselves and Kennedy the Cop takes center stage, constantly falling down on the job.

MEN O'WAR

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lewis R. Foster. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Ann Cornwall, Gloria Greer, Charlie Hall, Baldwin Cooke. We begin our May Day! May Day! Vessels in Distress festival with Stan and Ollie as sailors on leave and chasing skirts. The boys encounter two prospects in the park and proceed to offer refreshments. What follows is a variation on an old burlesque routine later adopted, and performed many times, by Abbott and Costello. The second reel is more action-oriented as the quartet decides to go for a boat ride in the lake. This cannot end well.



Next Meeting: Sunday, August 8th, 2021



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - August 8th, 2021



THE BATTLE ROYAL

1916 Vim Comedy Film Co. One Reel Directed by Will Louis. With Oliver Hardy, Billy Ruge, Elsie MacLeod, Billy Bletcher, Will Louis. Babe Hardy was in his third year appearing in motion pictures when he co-starred in this mountain feud comedy. Castle Films rescued this rarity and released it for one season in 1951.

WILDWEST DAZE

1933 Paul Terry-Educational Pictures One Reel Directed by Frank Moser. Music by Philip Scheib. Originally titled OH, SUSANNA, this cartoon featured an early appearance by Paul Terry's Puddy the Pup. The cartoon was released by Castle Films in 1941 and was in print for just a few short years.



UNDER THE COCKEYED MOON

1930 Fred Lally - Pathé Exchange Two Reels Directed by Wallace Fox. With Bobby Carney, Si Wills, Lew Kelly, Gay Seabrook, Dorothy Knapp, Harry O'Connor, Richard Cramer, Bobby Dunn, Hal Price. This was one of a handful of comedy shorts starring Carney & Wills made in 1930. Several familiar faces appear including one of Laurel and Hardy's fiercest villains Dick Cramer. As you will see, this short features one heck of a bizarre mode of transportation! A sad post-script: Si Wills was married to comedienne Joan Davis. Their daughter, Beverly Wills, died at age 30 with her children when their house burned down due to her smoking in bed.

WAY OUT WEST

1937 Hal Roach-MGM Seven Reels Directed by James W. Horne.
A Stan Laurel Production.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Sharon Lynne, Rosina Lawrence, Stanley Fields, Vivien Oakland, The Avalon Boys with Chill Wills, James C. Morton, Frank Mills, Ed Brady, Jim Mason, Mary Gordon, May Wallace, Tex Driscoll, Flora Finch.

A Masterpiece. Fans constantly debate which is Laurel and Hardy's best feature - SONS OF THE DESERT or WAY OUT WEST. For my money, this one wins hands down for all-out entertainment value. Great production, fast pace, charming musical interludes and some of the funniest set-pieces ever devised for Stan and Ollie. A bit of trivia - Tiny Sandford was originally cast as the Sheriff but was replaced by Stanley Fields. However, if you look closely at the long shot when the coach first pulls up in Brushwood Gulch you'll see Sandford as the burly lawman. The musical score by Marvin Hatley was nominated for an Academy Award.



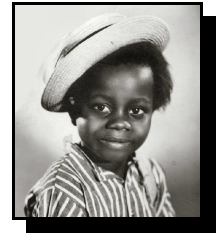
Next Meeting: Sunday, September 5th, 2021



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - September 5th, 2021

TWO TOO YOUNG 1936 Hal Roach-MGM One Reel Directed by Gordon Douglas. With Spanky McFarland, Alfalfa Switzer, Darla Hood, Buckwheat Thomas, Porky Lee, Jerry Tucker, Sidney Kibrick, Rosina Lawrence. Our Back-to-School show opens with a bang. One of the later Our Gang shorts produced by Roach, the title refers to Buckwheat and Porky whom Spanky and Alfalfa believe should not be trusted with having firecrackers. When Alfalfa is called to recite in front of the class, his choice of material is the perfect springboard for a total "backfire"!



SCHOOL DAYS 1932 Celebrity Prod.-MGM One Reel Directed by Ub Iwerks. Here's our favorite pre-code cartoon star Flip the Frog on his way to school with his faithful dog following behind.

VIOLENT IS THE WORD FOR CURLY 1939 Columbia Two Reels Directed by Charley Chase. With Moe Howard, Larry Fine, Curly Howard, Sam Adams, Marjorie Deanne, Eddie Fetherstone, Bud Jamison, Al Thompson. Here's one of the Stooges' best shorts which features not only a healthy dose of choreographed mayhem but also a delightful musical interlude. Director Charley Chase was also starring in his own series at Columbia.



A Chump at Oxford

1940 Hal Roach-United Artists 63 minutes Directed by Alfred Goulding. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Wilfred Lucas, Forrester Harvey, Forbes Murray, James Finlayson, Anita Garvin, Harry Bernard, Vivien Oakland, Peter Cushing, Charlie Hall, Gerald Rogers, Rex Lease, Sam Lufkin.

A CHUMP AT OXFORD was the next-to-last film that Laurel and Hardy made for producer Hal Roach. It's been a decade since we last screened the 63 minute foreign release version of this classic as opposed to the domestic "Streamliner". Most notable in the differences between the two versions is the first two reels of today's presentation which is, in essence, a talkie remake of the Boys' silent short FROM SOUP TO NUTS. In fact, brought back from the early days is Anita

Garvin, who played the same role in the silent version, that of the hostess whose dinner party is destroyed by her new maid and butler (Stan in drag again!). Of course, the bulk of the picture takes place at Oxford and provides the opportunity for Stan Laurel to showcase his immense talent as a character actor. And yes, keep your eyes peeled for a very, very young Peter Cushing as one of the naughty students.

Next Meeting: Sunday, October 3rd, 2021

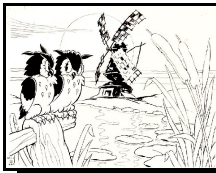


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - October 3rd, 2021

LIBERTY

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Tom Kennedy, Sam Lufkin, James Finlayson, Harry Bernard. One of the iconic Laurel and Hardy shorts has the Boys as escaped convicts doing their best to keep one step ahead of the cops. Unfortunately, those steps take them to higher elevation than they could possibly have dreamed! And, yes, director Leo McCarey is the same chap who went on to direct GOING MY WAY.



THE OLD MILL

1937 Walt Disney-RKO Radio One Reel Directed by Wilfred Jackson. Music by Leigh Harline. Winner of the 1937 Academy Award for Best Animated Short Subject. It's a pure mood piece with the denizens of a deserted mill surviving a raging storm.

COME CLEAN

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James W. Horne. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Gertrude Astor, Linda Lored, Charlie Hall and the Ever-Popular Mae Busch. Here's a Laurel & Hardy fan favorite. Maybe not loved by the critics, but it's loaded with great gags and favorite lines that Sons have been quoting for years. The Boys get sucked into a blackmail plot and try to keep a vamp from spilling all to their wives. All this because Stanley had to have a dish of ice cream!



ASLEEP IN THE FIELD

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Gus Meins. With Thelma Todd, Zasu Pitts, Billy Gilbert, Eddie Dunn, Nora Cecil, Anita Garvin. The girls decide to earn some extra money by taking jobs as Taxi Dancers. No, they did not dance on top of taxi cabs. Taxi Dancers were also known as dime-a-dance girls. Dancers for hire. Things have changed some since 1933!

GOING BYE BYE

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Walter Long, Sam Lufkin, Harry Dunkinson, Murdock MacQuarrie, Tiny Sandford, Lester Dorr, Fred Holmes, Elinor Van Devere. For years, GOING BYE BYE suffered indifferent regard from critics, but over the years as it enjoyed audience screenings its reputation has increased and it is now considered one of Laurel and Hardy's great comedies. After testifying and sending "Butch" Long to prison, Stan and Ollie are advised to get out of town. With insufficient funds for the trip, they advertise for a traveling companion. Who should reply but the Ever-Popular Mae Busch. But that's only half the story....



Next Meeting: Sunday, November 7th, 2021



THEM THAR HILLS – Oasis 281

Film Program - November 7th, 2021

Pathé News Presents Laurel and Hardy

1947-1952 A collection of British Pathé News sequences featuring Stan and Ollie on tour in the U.K.



THEIR LAST VISIT

The last footage, shot in 8mm Kodachrome, of Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy together in 1956.



STAN & OLLIE

2018 Entertainment One 98 minutes Directed by Jon S. Baird.

With Steve Coogan, John C. Reilly, Shirley Henderson, Nina Arianda, Rufus Jones, Danny Huston, Toby Sedgwick, Stephanie Hyam, Roger Ringrose.

This ambitious production, inspired by a book written by Sons of the Desert elder A. J. Marriot, features fine performances by Coogan and Reilly as Laurel and Hardy, while inventing some "tsuris" in their relationship. The characters of the wives were also highly dramatized (many of us in the Sons knew both Ida Laurel and Lucille Hardy (Price). And while Coogan and Reilly may have missed Stan and Babe's intrinsic sweetness and good nature, they still manage to present complex and convincing characterizations.



Next Meeting: Sunday, December 5th, 2021



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program December V, 2021

THE DUDS' CHRISTMAS

1936 Harman-Ising -MGM One Reel Directed by Rudolf Ising. Music by Scott Bradley. This is one of the innumerable lovely cartoons produced by Hugh Harman and Rudolf Ising for MGM. Their animation and designs rivaled Disney Studios and the shorts very often contained an emotional element missing from Walt's one-reel shorts.



CHRISTMAS NIGHT

1933 Van Beuren - RKO One Reel. Directed by James Tyer. Designed by Oscar Soglow. Music by Gene Rodemich. CHRISTMAS NIGHT is one of a dozen cartoons starring Soglow's popular comic strip character The Little King. This holiday short features the diminutive monarch once again bucking tradition and using common sense and compassion, traits seldom displayed by the countries' rulers and leaders.

CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR

1935 Max Fleischer-Paramount One Reel. Directed by Dave Fleischer. Music by Sammy Timberg. With the voices of Mae Questel and Everett Clark. This is one of Max Fleischer's most popular cartoons. Grampy, a character introduced in a Betty Boop cartoon, was an elderly rascal with a penchant for inventions and improvisation. When the kids in the local orphanage have a broken Christmas, Grampy comes to the rescue and ad-libs presents and surprises for the moppets.



BABES IN TOYLAND



1934 Hal Roach-MGM 79 minutes Directed by Gus Meins and Charles Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlotte Henry, Henry Brandon, Felix Knight, Florence Roberts, William Burress, Kewpie Morgan, Marie Wilson, Billy Bletcher, Tiny Sandford, Tiny Lipson, John George, Angelo Rossitto, Gus Leonard, Jerry Tucker, Gene Reynolds, William Austin. It's a Holiday tradition, our annual trip to Toyland. Stan and Babe's charming version of Victor Herbert's 1903 operetta was quickly forgotten after its 1934 theatrical release. After buying the property from Hal Roach and then scrapping ideas for a remake, William LeBaron and Boris Morros licensed the film to Robert Lippert who reissued it as MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS. Due to restrictions from the Herbert estate, the original title and opening song were cut and the censors demanded the "Go to Sleep, Slumber Deep" song be eliminated since it ended with Tom Tom and Bo Peep spooning on the cave floor! Some prints had gruesome scenes of the bogeymen cut out. Over the years, MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS became a TV staple at holiday times, recently in a ghastly colorized version. And recently the rights to the film have once again reverted to WPIX-TV in New York, who control all licensing. Regardless, we have the MGM uncut original release on film and in all its black-and-white glory (and gory!). Here's hoping you enjoy this Holiday Tradition.

Have a Great Holiday! We'll See You in March, 2022!



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - April 3, 2022

THEM THAR HILLS

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Billy Gilbert, Mae Busch, Charlie Hall, Dick Alexander, Bobby Dunn, Sam Lufkin, Eddie Baker. As has become customary, we are opening our Tent's season with its Laurel and Hardy namesake. Thanks to his propensity to overindulge, Ollie is ordered by Dr. Gilbert to take a trip up into the mountains where, of course, *things happen!* In addition to the antique charmer "The Old Spinning Wheel", Marvin Hatley's "I Wake Up With A Song" is heard on the soundtrack in this classic short. This was the first of two shorts in which Mae Busch and Charlie Hall played Mr. and Mrs. And their union resulted in being forever part of the Organization's ceremonial toasts.



MOTHER GOOSE GOES HOLLYWOOD

1938 Walt Disney-RKO Radio One Reel Directed by Wilfred Jackson. With the voices of Clarence Nash, Danny Webb, Dave Barry and Sara Berner. Here's a Hollywood spoof from Mr. Disney littered with caricatures of famous stars. Of course, Stan and Ollie are in there pitching as Simple Simon and the Pie Man. Coincidentally, those are the roles Hal Roach intended them to play in *his* original script for BABES IN TOYLAND (which Stan discarded!).

THE FINISHING TOUCH

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels

Directed by Clyde Bruckman and Leo McCarey. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, Dorothy Coburn, Sam Lufkin. This is one of the Boys' best silents and the first short featuring them in their coverall work clothes. Here they are house builders, erecting a domicile right next door to a hospital that requires Q-U-I-E-T!! When one of the nurses complains about the noise, Officer Kennedy investigates.



FLY MY KITE

1931 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels With Jackie Cooper, Allen "Farina" Hoskins, Matthew "Stymie" Beard, Dorothy DeBorja, Wheeler Hutchins, Chubby Cheney, Margaret Mann, Jim Mason, and the Ever-popular Mae Busch. One of the most memorable of the early Our Gang talkies. The kids are hanging out with Grandma, a tough old bird if ever there was one. But her no-good adopted son wants to kick Granny out and make room for his vamp/tramp/trollop of a wife. Of course, the Gang will have something to say about THAT!

TIT FOR TAT

1935 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Charlie Hall, James C. Morton, Bobby Dunn. Finally, the sequel to our namesake short, THEM THAR HILLS. Stan and Ollie open their new Electric Supply Store. Being neighborly, they extend the hand of friendship to the grocers next door. Stan remembers them. The grocers remember Stan and Ollie. And, in the mind of Mr. Hall, all is NOT forgiven. This was the next-to-last Laurel and Hardy two-reeler and the second Laurel and Hardy film to be nominated for an Academy Award.



Next Meeting: **SATURDAY, April 30th**



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - April 30th, 2022

THE AMOS N' ANDY SHOW - "THE CONVENTION"

1953 Hal Roach - CBS Television Network 25 minutes. Directed by Charles T. Barton. With Alvin Childress, Spencer Williams, Tim Moore, Ernestine Wade, Amanda Randolph, Johnny Lee, Ernest Mayhand, Bill Walker.



The Amos N' Andy television series has been out of official distribution since the mid-1960's when the NAACP complained to CBS that the characters were detrimental to African-Americans. It's a pity since the show was cast with some of the finest black comedians in the country and the foibles of Amos, Andy and the Kingfish were no more representative of any group than were those of Ralph Kramden and Ed Norton. Nevertheless, CBS has kept the show under lock and key ever since, despite a proliferation of unofficial prints (including this one!). We hope you enjoy this latter-day production of Hal Roach Studios.

SONS OF THE DESERT

1933 Hal Roach - MGM 68 minutes Directed by William A. Seiter. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charley Chase, Mae Busch, Dorothy Christy, Lucien Littlefield, Charlie Hall, Harry Bernard, Sam Lufkin, Stanley Blystone, voice of Billy Gilbert.

Our Convention Special showcases the picture that inspired our worldwide organization. It also inspired homages by Amos N' Andy, The Honeymooners and even The Flintstones.

One of the great comedy features of all time, SONS OF THE DESERT is the ultimate Laurel and Hardy domestic adventure and features the Ever-Popular Mae Busch in her signature role as Mrs. Hardy. The plot is simple - the Sons are having their annual convention in Chicago and Ollie must figure a way to go (Stan's lovely wife gave her permission without blinking an eyelash). Ollie's cooked up story backfires bigtime and now they must figure out a way to explain things. One of the unexpected delights in this picture is Charley Chase's hilarious role as an obnoxious conventioneer. An unforgettable classic. Enjoy!



Next Meeting: Sunday, June 5th

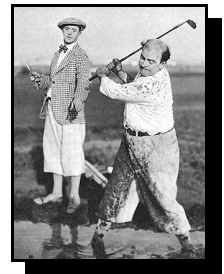


THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - June 5, 2022

SHOULD MARRIED MEN GO HOME?

1928 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott and Leo McCarey With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Edgar Kennedy, Kay Deslys, Dorothy Coburn, Charlie Hall, Sam Lufkin, Edna Marion, Viola Richard, Lyle Tayo. Our Golf Spectacular tees off with a reprise of a silent classic we showed last in 2012. Stan enjoys the bachelor's life and Ollie has made the marital leap. After realizing that a quiet day at home with hubby is not to be, Mrs. Hardy sends Ollie off to the golf course with Stan. A couple of girls, some hijinks on the links, and the irrepressible Edgar Kennedy set the stage for yet another tit-for-tat finale.



RAGTIME ROMEO

1931 Celebrity - MGM One Reel Directed by Ub Iwerks. Flip is off to see his girlfriend in his trusty (rusty?) jalopy. Unfortunately, his efforts to entertain his lady love are not appreciated by her neighbor.

HOG WILD

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Fay Holderness, Dorothy Granger, Charles MacMurphy. Here's a combo of two Laurel and Hardy settings - domestic Boys and working Boys. We're at the Hardy home. Ollie is ready to do guy stuff with Stanley but his wife insists he put up the radio aerial first. Stan assists. Heard on the soundtrack is Leroy Shield's song "Smile When The Raindrops Fall", written for a Charley Chase short.



HOT MONEY

1935 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James W. Horne. With Thelma Todd, Patsy Kelly, James Burke, Fred Kelsey, Brooks Benedict, Hooper Atchley, Charlie Hall, Lee Phelps. This is one of the last of the Thelma Todd-Patsy Kelly shorts made at Hal Roach. The girls are about to be evicted when a thief on the lam stashes his stolen loot with Patsy and Thelma.

THE FIXER UPPERS

1935 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Charley Rogers. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Mae Busch, Charles Middleton, Arthur Housman, James C. Morton, Bob O'Connor, Bobby Dunn, Noah Young. This was the next-to-last two reeler with Laurel and Hardy. After TIT FOR TAT they would appear exclusively in feature pictures. THE FIXER UPPERS is a burlesque on romantic melodrama with the "Ever-Popular" Mae Busch bemoaning the loss of her husband's affections. Stan and Ollie, as greeting card salesmen, offer to help by making the husband jealous. They succeed - too well - and the husband (played by the wonderful Charles Middleton) challenges Ollie to a duel. Another nice mess!



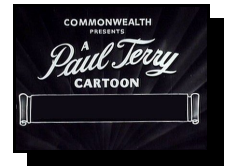
Next Meeting: Sunday, July 3rd, 2022



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

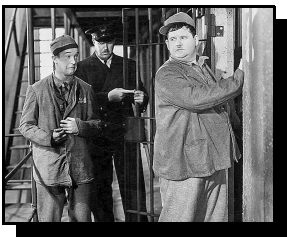
Film Program - July 3, 2022

JAILBREAK 1929 Van Beuren-Pathé One Reel Directed by Paul Terry. Originally released theatrically as JAIL BREAKERS, this early talkie Terrytoon was part of the tv package shown on local stations in the 1950's and 1960's. Paul Terry wound up producing over 1,100 shorts, making him the most prolific creator of animated cartoons. While the original release version of this short featured music by Gene Rodemich, who had scored the Van Beuren reissues of Chaplin's Mutual shorts, these Commonwealth Television prints feature music from the Valentino Music Library. The main title theme is entitled "Komedy Kapers" and was composed by Roger Roger.



JAIL 1951 TCA Productions Three Reels Directed by Jean Yarbrough. With Bud Abbott, Lou Costello, Hillary Brooke, Sidney Fields, Gordon Jones, Joe Kirk, Stanley Andrews, Iris Adrian. This was the third episode of Abbott & Costello's filmed television series. Lou's purpose for filming the shows as opposed to doing them live was so that he could own the great burlesque routines that were showcased throughout the entire first season of the show. This episode features the classic "Slowly I Turn" sketch, in which Sidney Fields hits a home run as the derelict.

ROAMIN' HOLIDAY 1937 Hal Roach-MGM one reel Directed by Gordon Douglas. With Spanky McFarland, Alfalfa Switzer, Porky Lee, Buckwheat Thomas, Darla Hood, Otis Harlan, May Wallace. The gang, tired of babysitting, runs away from home. When they get hungry they try the kindness of some storekeepers in a neighboring town but wind up on the rock pile instead! Was Hal Roach trying for a junior version of the Dead End Kids??? FYI - Mr. Jenks (Otis Harlan) was the voice of Happy in Disney's SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS.



JAILBIRDS 1931 Hal Roach-MGM 56 minutes Directed by James Parrott.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, James Finlayson, Wilfred Lucas, Tiny Sandford, Walter Long, June Marlowe, Harry Bernard, Eddie Dunn, Otto Fries, Charlie Hall, Bob Kortman, Sam Lufkin.

A rare British release print of Stan and Ollie's 1931 feature PARDON US. This was Laurel and Hardy's first feature-length film. Like most of the other Laurel and Hardy comedies of the 1930-31 season, Hal Roach made alternate versions of PARDON US in German, French and Spanish. The French version featured Boris Karloff as "The Tiger" and the foreign versions included a fire sequence (the foreign markets wanted longer-length features). The critical response was mixed as some reviewers, who were never enamored with Stan and Ollie to begin with, thought that their antics did not support six reels of celluloid. One of the highlights of the film takes place during the Boys' brief escape from prison and Ollie gets a chance to do a lovely rendition of "Lazy Moon". This 1903 ballad by J. Rosemond Johnson and Bob Cole was later recorded by Harry Nilsson. By the way, warden's daughter is played by dark-haired June Marlowe, who is more familiar to you as blonde Miss Crabtree in the early talking Our Gang comedies.

Next Meeting: Sunday, August 7th, 2022



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program - August 7th, 2018

THE TREE IN A TEST TUBE

1942 20th Century-Fox / U.S. Department of Agriculture One Reel Directed by Charles McDonald. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy. Narrated by a Smith named Pete. This was the second and last Laurel and Hardy movie filmed in color (the first being THE ROGUE SONG in 1930). This informational short, photographed on Kodachrome film with a 16mm silent camera, was made during a lunch break at 20th Century-Fox on November 29, 1941, while they were preparing their 2nd feature for the studio, A-HAUNTING WE WILL GO. The print in the Them Thar Hills collection came from the Department of Agriculture and is very rare in that it is the full-length ten minute short. Most extant prints are dupes that only include the five minute Laurel and Hardy section.



ALL-STAR BOND RALLY

1942 20th Century-Fox / U.S. Dept. Of Treasury One Reel Directed by Michael Audley. With Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Harpo Marx, Carmen Miranda, Linda Darnell, Betty Grable, Harry James & His Orchestra, Fibber McGee and Molly, Glenn Langan, Almira Sessions. This was 20th Century Fox's contribution to the 7th War Loan effort - an all-star revue designed to inspire theater patrons to buy war bonds. This is a rare original print.

THE BIG NOISE 1944 20th Century-Fox 74 minutes

Directed by Mal St. Clair. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Doris Merrick, Arthur Space, Bobby Blake, Jack Norton, Veda Ann Borg, Esther Howard, Frank Fenton, James Bush, Edgar Dearing.

This was the fourth feature Stan and Babe made under their new contract with 20th Century-Fox. It's disastrous reputation dates back to Leonard Maltin's TV MOVIES rating of BOMB, a completely unworthy assessment. While THE BIG NOISE is certainly not up to any of the work done by the Boys at Hal Roach, the film nevertheless has some great gags, an elaborate changing-room sequence, and a musical score by David Buttolph that helps keep up the pace. It's a wartime scenario with Laurel and Hardy impersonating detectives and hired to guard a new secret weapon. Of course, enemy agents are out to steal the bomb.



Next Meeting - Sunday, September 4th



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - September 4th, 2022

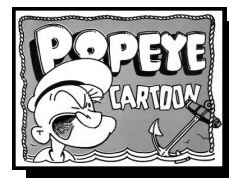


THEIR PURPLE MOMENT

1929 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Anita Garvin, Kay Deslys, Fay Holderness, Lyle Tayo, Tiny Sandford, Leo Willis, Jimmy Aubrey, Sam Lufkin, Gene Morgan, Patsy O'Byrne. A silent short from the domestic side of the Laurel and Hardy canon, with the boys ditching their wives and taking up with a couple of flappers. This scenario was partially reworked in the Boys' 1936 feature OUR RELATIONS.

Let's You and Him Fight

1934 Max Fleischer-Paramount One Reel Directed by Dave Fleischer. With the voices of William Costello, William Pennell, Bonnie Poe and Charles Lawrence. Amateur pug Popeye takes on Bluto the Champ. Where's the spinach???



BRATS

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy. Here's a double-dose of Stan and Babe. In fact - two "babes". In BRATS, Stan and Ollie play themselves AND their own children. The short is a delightful exercise in creative set-dressing, clever special effects, wonderful pantomime and pure L&H silliness. If there is a message in this film, it might be that grown-ups can be just as childish - perhaps moreso - than their offspring. A soundtrack note. BRATS, originally released with non-studio jazz recordings on the soundtrack, was reissued in 1937 with a new modern musical score by Leroy Shield. The reissue print is the version being shown this evening. Both editions appear on the DVD set Laurel and Hardy the Essential Collection.

THE SAM POMERANTZ SCANDALS

1963 Calvada-Desilu 25 minutes Directed by Claudio Guzman. With Dick Van Dyke, Mary Tyler Moore, Rose Marie, Morey Amsterdam, Richard Deacon, Lenny Weinrib, Joan Shawlee, and Henry Calvin as Sam Pomerantz. This is an episode from the second season of THE DICK VAN DYKE SHOW with Rob, Laura, Buddy and Sally helping out an old friend by entertaining at his resort hotel (presumably in the Catskills!). The grand finale has Rob and Sam doing a routine playing our two favorite comedians. This episode was made just two years after Calvin had appeared opposite Gene Sheldon in Walt Disney's remake of BABES IN TOYLAND.



BUSY BODIES

1933 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Lloyd French. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlie Hall, Tiny Sandford, Charley Young. We wind things up with one of the immortals. No plot, just Stan and Babe going-to, and at -work. At the lumber mill. With wood. And saws. What more do you NEED TO KNOW!? There is virtually no dialogue yet sound plays a very important part in the film.

Next Meeting: Sunday, October 2nd



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis 281

Film Program - October 2nd, 2022



THE LUCKY CORNER

1936 Hal Roach-MGM Two Reels Directed by Gus Meins. With Spanky McFarland, Scotty Beckett, Alfalfa Switzer, Buckwheat Thomas, Leonard Kibrick, William Wagner, James C. Morton, Gus Leonard, Harold Switzer. This was Scotty Beckett's last Our Gang short for Hal Roach, though he would return for two more after MGM took over production. The Gang helps Gus sell his lemonade but they face resentment by a cranky Orangeade shop owner who doesn't like competition.

HARE RIBBIN'

1942 Leon Schlesinger - Warner Bros. One Reel. Directed by Bob Clampett. With the voices of Mel Blanc and Sam Wolfe. Bugs spends the reel trying to evade a French poodle who sounds suspiciously like the Mad Russian (Sam Wolfe imitating Bert Gordon of radio fame). By the way, if you think the ending of this toon is rough the original version was even worse!



Swiss Miss

1938 Hal Roach - MGM 72 minutes Directed by John G. Blystone. Music by Marvin Hatley.

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Della Lind, Walter Woolf King, Eric Blore, Ludivico Tomarchio, Adia Kuznetzkof, Charles Gemora, Charles Judels, Anita Garvin, Jean de Briac, George Sorel, Stanley Blystone, Sammy Brooks, Baldwin Cooke, Lester Dorr, Tex Driscoll, Eddie Kane, Michael Mark, Bob O'Connor, Buck the Dog, Dinah the Mule.

Stan and Ollie are mousetrap salesman in Switzerland. This film is a bit of a throwback in that the Boys are somewhat supporting players to the primary storyline involving an operetta composer (Walter Woolf King - who was a foil for the Marx Bros in A NIGHT AT THE OPERA) and his singer-wife (Della Lind) who is working incognito at the chateau where her husband has retreated to work in peace and quiet. Of course, with Stan and Ollie in the vicinity, peace and quiet are in danger to say the least. The film was given a national spotlight when famed critic James Agee mentioned the comedy highlight of the picture in his 1949 LIFE magazine article "Comedy's Greatest Era". The Boys' comedy foil in SWISS MISS is the chateau's kitchenmeister, played by Adia Kuznetzkof. Kuznetzkof is fondly remembered by Universal horror fans for his singing of "Faro La, Faro Li" in FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN. Also in the cast is Eric Blore, who was a staple of the Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers films over at RKO, and Anita Garvin, the long-legged comedienne of Hal Roach Studios since the silent days.



Next Meeting: Sunday, November 6th



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program - November 6, 2022

SAILORS BEWARE

1927 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels silent with music by Max Steiner Directed by Fred Guiol. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Anita Garvin, Frank Brownlee, Harry Earles, Tiny Sandford, Will Stanton, May Wallace, Lupe Velez. This is one of the early pairings of Laurel and Hardy though as yet they were not appearing as a "team". Stan is a hapless cabbie shanghaied aboard an ocean liner. Blustery Captain Brownlee puts him in Ollie's hands. Also aboard is a confidence duo led by a midget (Harry Earles, later of FREAKS fame). Hot tamale Lupe Velez, later RKO's "Mexican Spitfire", makes her second film appearance as Baroness Behr.

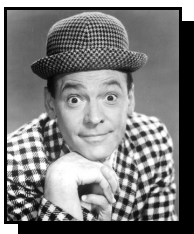


FARMYARD WHOOPEE

1934 Paul Terry - Educational Pictures One Reel Directed by Frank Moser and Paul Terry Music by Philip Scheib. This entry in the adventures of Farmer Al Falfa was originally titled "Why Mules Leave Home" when released theatrically.

THE SAWMILL

1941 Warner Bros. Two Reels Produced by Gordon Hollingshead. Music by William Lava. With Billy Bevan, Kewpie Morgan, Mildred June, James Finlayson. This Vitaphone Broadway Brevette is adapted from the 1922 Mack Sennett comedy GYMNASIUM JIM, directed by Roy Del Ruth. Warners released several shorts made up from "old time comedies" in the early 1940's.



DENTAL FOLLIES

1937 Educational Pictures One Reel Directed by William Watson. With Pinky Lee, Harold Walldridge, Aileen Cook, Barbara MacDonald, The Eltons, Mary Sutherland, Andy Anderson's Orchestra. This is one of the many musical revue shorts made during the late 1930's that featured night club acts getting some rare screen time. The star, Pinky Lee, was a burlesque comic who would appear in a few films and then become a staple in 1950's television.

ANOTHER FINE MESS

1930 Hal Roach-MGM Three Reels Directed by James Parrott. With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Thelma Todd, James Finlayson, Charles Gerard, Eddie Dunn, Harry Bernard. One of the early talkies, this extended-length short makes very good use of its time. Gags are built upon with multiple toppers; Stan gets to present an alternate (and how!) characterization; lovely Thelma Todd is as charming as could be; silly-ass Charles Gerard (who also appeared in Universal's DRACULA the same year) brings a bit of the English Music Hall feeling to the proceedings; and our old friend Fin takes it big! This was the only Laurel and Hardy short to be introduced by Beverly and Betty Mae Crane - the "Talking Titles". The usher-outfitted pair announced the credits on several other Hal Roach shorts.

Next Meeting - Sunday, December 4th



THEM THAR HILLS - Oasis # 281

Film Program - December 4th, 2022

TOYLAND PREMIERE 1934 Walter Lantz-Universal One Reel

This wonderful early Lantz cartoon features an all-star animated cast including Johnny Weissmuller and his then-wife Lupe Velez; Frankenstein's monster; Eddie Cantor; Shirley Temple and, of course, Laurel and Hardy. Tonight's print is of the 1940's reissue version with Carl Laemmle's name removed from the titles.



GOOD CHEER 1924 Hal Roach-Pathé Two Reels With Johnny Downs, Mickey Daniels, Farina Hoskins, Joe Cobb, Jackie Condon, Mary Kornman, Charlie Hall, Sam Lufkin, Noah Young. Here's a very rare Our Gang short from the silent days. The gang tries to help some orphan kids have a merry Christmas. They are, of course, as enterprising as ever! The synchronized musical score was produced using recordings by The Beau Hunks of Leroy Shields' famous themes that he composed for Hal Roach Studios.

BABES IN TOYLAND

1934 Hal Roach-MGM Nine Reels

With Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Charlotte Henry, Henry Brandon, Felix Knight, Florence Roberts, William Burrell, Kewpie Morgan, Marie Wilson, Billy Bletcher, Tiny Sandford, Tiny Lipson, John George, Angelo Rossitto, Gus Leonard, Jerry Tucker, Gene Reynolds, William Austin. This poor film has been so badly treated over the years it is amazing that it has survived intact. As early as the late 1940's, distributors began chopping pieces out of it. First thing to go was the title. When Federal Films bought the film from Hal Roach in 1948, they were unable to renew the license on the title from the Victor Herbert estate. Thus, the title was changed to MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS (the name under which the film continues to be marketed to television and on video). Next, the opening song by Virginia Kernes as Mother Goose was removed because she enters from within a book titled Babes in Toyland! Next, the "Go To Sleep Slumber Deep" sequence was removed because at the end of the scene Tom Tom and Bo Peep are seen sleeping beside one another (a no-no for the 1940's censors). Then close-ups of the dreaded Bogeymen were removed. Finally, the storybook End Title was replaced because it carried a NRA emblem (National Recovery Administration). The original nitrate fine grain of BABES IN TOYLAND was rescued from the vaults when this writer was assigned to track it down for a CBS Video release. Finding the original at George Eastman House in Rochester, a 16mm reduction negative of the first reel was made for inspection purposes. Fortunately, several prints were made of this footage, as well as of the cave scene and end title so that quite a few collectors now have complete prints of the film. BABES IN TOYLAND has been artificially colorized by two different companies. THEM THAR HILLS is pleased to be able to present the complete original black-and-white version of this timeless holiday classic.



Have a Great Holiday! We'll See You in March, 2010!