



FAVORITE MOVIE

02-11-2103 By Harry Zirkelbach

His list of favorite movie is huge.

It began as boy when a cousin took me to see my first movie "Hells Angels", at the local Nickelodeon. That boy, thrilled at the thought of flying, and here were re-enactments of dogfights between enemies of World War I, every pilot a hero, admired, loved by the girls.

In High School, an afternoon paper route of four years kept him from school activities after classes. It did allow viewing of double-features after collecting from customers Saturday mornings. The quality of the film was indifferent; viewer lured by the serial "To Be Continued" perils of Flash Gordon, Tim McCoy, Buster Crabbe.

Then two years as Doorman at Colonial Theater while in College at home in Erie. First run movies of lesser studios, the female usher romance stories more interesting than many of the movies.

Next great movie spree is in Navy. First, watching in South Pacific Islands, open air, chairs made of bombs, sweating in the heat/humidity, rain, with buddies, beer in hand, movie indifferent to all.

Then months in Japan with Army where G.I.'s are shown the great silent and early talkies, especially comics, Harold Lloyd, Chaplin, Laurel & Hardy, Keaton, Harry Langdon.

Then immediate post war movies in Washington DC. Theatre houses import foreign films, a whole new world of actors, languages. Memorable, the theatre, a block from White House, back-projector allowing near full light in the theater without loss of screen detail.

Arrive in Denver, am taken to see Edward G Robinson's "Silver Dollar" to understand some Colorado history (the Tabor tales), then asked to read "Timberline" (Bonfils and Denver Post). Even today these are base for much of his appreciation of rugged Colorado.



Married, movie attendance lessens, involves family choices. Seldom see lousy telling.

Immediately after this topic is suggested, Denver Library provides copy of Steinbeck's East of Eden. he and wife watch, enjoy. Then, the disc offers critique by Richard Shickel. They bite, find the movie repeated, with constant comment from the critic, mixed with movie dialogue. Only watching of a movie twice in one setting, enjoys them both.

Didn't realize Director Elia Kazan had agreed with Steinbeck, to people the movie with actors not from Hollywood. Chooses cast from New York stage, a few, their first movie.

Also learn,



*... Abel, major role by Richard Davalos. this man's only movie;
With Cain, James Dean is introduced, becomes Super Star.*

*... sin seems glamorized when the boys' mom, (Eve) played by Jo VanFleet
running a House of Ill repute, wins the Academy Award.*

... Raymond Massey, boys father, is really from the wealthy Tractor family.

*... James Dean was wildly difficult to Direct; with his first Hollywood check early in
filming the movie, buys a horse, grooms it constantly, requiring the Studio to move the
horse far away to get Dean to be on time for any schedules shooting.*

*... and finally, none of these details lessens the impact of the Bible story of Cain and Abel.
Stresses the significance of the Director in controlling egos to tell the story in his mind
since much of Steinbeck's book is not used in the movie.*

Greatest movie? Lots.

*Recently, enjoyed "Life of Pi". The Director tells the story with little dialogue.
Writers know how contradictory that is!*

*Our world is in three dimensions. Taken for granted. 3D, in "Pi" for those with two eyes,
is so real, unnoticeable, that only when the Director
throws an object at the audience, and it whistles by an ear, is the viewer aware
the movie realistically imitates life.*

*This added to enjoyment.
Besides he likes cats*

