



Mostly about People

By Wally Trabing

Talked to two movie stars on the subject of kissing the other day.

I asked William Lundigan ("Pinky," "Love Nest," "I'll Get By," "Dodge City," "Friendly Island," etc., and "Men Into Space" series on TV) how much lip service he's given during his film career.

"Well," he said, savoring the past, "with rehearsals and all I guess I averaged about 20 kisses per picture — not including a few sneaked in on the side —

"Twenty kisses times the 70 movies I've made — well, that's a powerful lot of kissing."

Some of his kissing partners have been Jean Crain, Susan Hayward, Hedy Lamar, Marilyn Monroe, and Dianna Durbin — "ooh that goes back," he said.

"Who was best?" I asked, my voice cracking.

"I'm a devout coward. I'm not going to say," he said in a cowardly devout manner.

There went sex out of the interview. We talked academically.

He said those with kissing parts in a movie wear special salve and powder on the lips to prevent them from sticking and s-t-r-e-t-c-h-i-n-g out Ubangi style when the screen lovers part during a close up.

No solution has been found, however, for a growling stomach during the tender moments of a kiss.

"The director yells: 'Thunder in the mountains' and we stop and shoot it over," said Lundigan.

The good looking actor in his late 40's responded to the Taylor-Burton affair by saying "when you make a movie you are bound to get a crush on the gal playing opposite you if you want to make the acting believable."

He said, however, that his wife is not half as disturbed at seeing him kiss another woman on the screen as she is if he gives a bad performance.

Lundigan has made frequent TV appearances also, so I asked if TV kissing is different from movie kissing.

"No," he said, "just faster."

"You come on the set at 8 o'clock in the morning, meet a beautiful woman and five minutes later you're kissing her all over the place."

A few days later I talked to Mrs. William Jackie of 330 Ninth avenue, who during the silent days set male hearts aflutter under the name of Ruth Dwyer.

There was no worry about growling stomachs in those days. "We used rather wild gestures and more or less threw ourselves together into the kiss," recalled the former star.

Some of her screen lovers were Benny Leonard, lightweight boxing champ in 1925; Monte Banks, Buster Keaton, Hoot Gibson, Buck Jones and Edward Everett Horton.

One of her non-kissing films was "First White Fangs" with the famed screen dog "Strongheart" in 1924.

She said one of the hottest

silent films of the day was "Reckless Age." She played opposite that English smoothy, Reginald Denny. It was chuck full of love scenes and golly-gee suggestiveness.

The piano and violin players in the theaters dripped hearts and flowers music throughout most of the film.

"We always used Max Factor stick grease paint, heavy eye shadow and eye makeup, and our lips were made up in a cupid's bow," she recalled.

"Those were the days when the male movie fans went more for shapely legs than for big bosoms.

"But it was always good to have both."