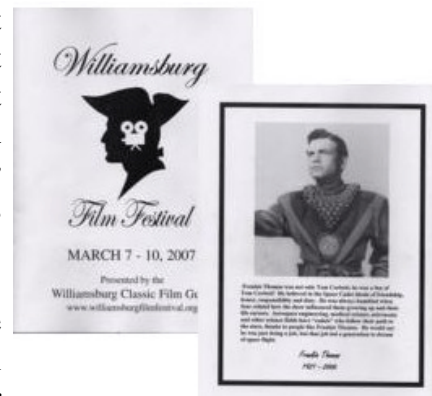


The Thunder Child's Report on
The Williamsburg Film Festival 2007
March 8 - 10, 2007

The Williamsburg Film Festival (March 7-10, 2007)

Prelude

I attended the 11th annual Williamsburg Film Festival this last week and had a great time. The festival has a western theme, but all of the guest actors have so many years in the business that they've acted in some science fiction (indeed, fans of Richard Anderson were treated to the cult sci-fi film *The Curse of the Faceless Man*), and the Solar Guard holds its reunion here as well.



I was pleased that the festival's coordinators had honored the late Frankie Thomas (*Tom Corbett*, *Space Cadet*) with his photo on the back page of the program, and that Cadet Ed of the Solar Guard had taken out a half-page banner inside wishing him Spaceman's Luck.

Wednesday was a day for out-of-town festival attendees to arrive, and dealers to set up in the Dealer's Room, with their stock of memorabilia and movies. The guests themselves would not be available until Thursday, when the Festival officially began.

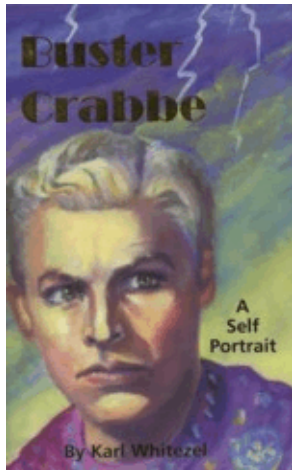
I came for a half hour, to pick up my media passes, and then scoped out the dealer's room. Most of the dealers come to the Williamsburg Film Festival every year, with a vast wealth of material. I went around from dealer to dealer of DVDs, making lists of items I'd pick up as the days went on.

March 7, 2007: Wednesday

I came across a copy of the Buster Crabbe autobiography (written with the help of Karl Whitezel), which the dealer was offering for cover price, so I snapped that up immediately. Another dealer, who had masses and masses of vintage comic books, TV Guides, and other material unfortunately out of my price range, had among other items a Tom Corbett book for sale (not one of

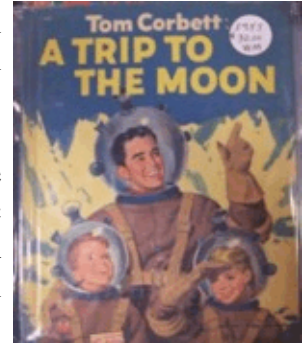
Guests

Richard Anderson
Audrey Dalton
Margia Dean
Ed Faulkner
James Hampton
David Huddleston
Heather Lowe
Andrew Prine
Neil Summers



the series of eight written for teens - which had been my first introduction to Tom Corbett, but one written for young children.)

I also spoke briefly with Martin Grams, Jr. While he was there in his guise as a seller of DVDs of public domain movies and TV shows, I was more interested in his work as the author of more than a half-dozen guides to various Old Time Radio shows.



After a few more minutes prowling the aisles for any more possible bargains, I headed out, only to meet Cadet Ed (head of the Solar Guard reunion) and his wife Rae at the door. We spoke briefly, then I let him go to finish his set-up of the Solar Guard table, as I'd be spending more time with the Solar Guard in the next three days.

I Attended:

Thursday

Movie with cast member

James Hampton
Ed Faulkner

Panels:

Heather Lowe and Andrew Prine
Audrey Dalton and Margia Dalton

Friday

Movie with cast member

Heather Lowe
Margia Dean
Neil Summers

Panels:

Ed Faulkner and James Hampton
Richard Anderson and David Huddleston

Saturday

Movie with cast member

Richard Anderson
Audrey Dalton
David Huddleston

Thursday (March 9, 2007)

All guest stars, and some of the entertainers, were available in the Dealers Room at selected times throughout the three days to sign autographs and talk with fans. I made the rounds, along with Cadet Ed and his wife, to get all the autographing out of the way so that I could concentrate on the panels and after-movie-talks still to come.

The Guest stars

Richard Anderson guest-starred on many Western TV shows and in a few movies. His most famous character is Oscar Goldman from *The Six Million Dollar Man* and *The Bionic Woman*, and as Kolchak's *The Night Strangler*.

Audrey Dalton appeared in many TV shows and many movies, including Westerns such as *The Bounty Killer*, horror such as *Mr. Sardonicus*, and in the cult sci-fi film *The Monster That Challenged the World*.



Richard Anderson and action figure

Margia Dean appeared in *The Baron of Arizona* with Vincent Price, *FBI Girl*, and *The Last of the Desperados*. She was also the wife of the metamorphosing astronaut in *The Quatermass Experiment* who went memorably mad.



Audrey Dalton

Ed Faulkner guest-starred as a villain in many an episode of *Have Gun, Will Travel*, *Rawhide* and *Bonanza*. He also appeared in several John Wayne films including *Hellfighters* and *The Green Berets*. He retired from acting in the 1970s to pursue a career in the marine transport business.



Margia Dean and her husband Felipe



Ed Faulkner



James Hampton and wife Mary



David Huddleston and his wife

James Hampton has guest-starred on many TV shows and in many movies. His first starring movie role was in *Hawmps*, and he is perhaps most famous as Bugler Duggan from *F-Troop*. His science fiction movies included roles in *The Cat From Outer Space* and *Condorman*.

David Huddleston guest-starred on quite a few drama series during the 1970s and 80s. Had the starring role in the movie *Santa Claus* in 1985 and several memorable movie roles such as in *Blazing Saddles*.



David Huddleston chats with Heather Lowe

Heather Lowe guest-starred in a smattering of TV shows during the late 1970s and early 1980s, including *Three's Company*, *Knots Landing* and *Greatest American Hero*. She then became a



Andrew Prine

producer, with *Avenging Angel* with Tom Berenger as her first offering. She is the President of Oxford Group Productions, and their latest production, the science fiction comedy *Mega Con in Aberdeen*, will be making its debut at this year's Cannes Film Festival.

Andrew Prine's long career has included dozen of guest-appearances in Westerns and crime dramas, as well as science fiction classics as *V*, *Deep Space Nine* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Andrew is married to Heather Lowe.

Acclaimed stuntman and sometime actor Neil Summers was also present at the Festival, and gave two well-received presentations, however I somehow missed him in the autograph/dealer's room.

Having made my way to the rear of the room after methodically getting autographs, I saw that actor



- and now painter - James Best - was busy working away in the rear corner! There was no announcement that he'd be there. He lives relatively close by and just wanted to come and display and sell his artwork. (And also perhaps to have a chat with Richard Anderson during Anderson's panel, as described on Friday's page.)

I watched him work for a few minutes, and admired some of his paintings. According to some people he's most famous for his role in *The Dukes of Hazzard*. Science fiction fans will beg

to differ -- his star shines bright for three memorable *Twilight Zone* episodes: "Jess-Belle," "The Last Rites of Jeff Myrtlebank," and "The Grave," not to mention *The Killer Shrews*!

[On a side note, when *The Killer Shrews* first came out it was on a double feature with *The Giant Gila Monster*, both films shot in Texas and produced by radio/movie theater mogul Gordon McClendon.]

PLEASE SEE THE ONLINE VERSION OF THIS ARTICLE FOR HOT LINKS TO ALL ACTORS WHO HAVE WEBSITES.

The Solar Guard Reunion

Fans of 1950s science fiction TV series such as *Tom Corbett*, *Space Cadet*, *Space Patrol*, *Captain Video*, etc. have been holding a Reunion at the Williamsburg Film Festival for the last several years. Last year was a special one -- Frankie Thomas and Jan Merlin attended the festival and performed in a performance of a Tom Corbett radio enactment written by Jan, "Project Enigma." (Read about the 2006 Solar Guard Reunion at *The Thunder Child*.)



This year, twelve cadets showed up over the course of the three days, and were treated to several



hours of classic SF TV, showing off several crystal clear episodes of Space Patrol that had recently been found. Cadet Mike Turco returned with his X-RC cockpit reproduction - complete with movable knobs and dials and switches that lighted up.

Each year, Cadet Ed comes up with a new premium to give to Solar Guard members. This year it was trading cards - featuring Rocky Jones, Buzz Corry, Cadet Happy, Tom Corbett, Roger Manning and Captain Video.

James Hampton film: Mackintosh and T.J.

Mackintosh and T.J. (1975), a modern-day Western, was Roy Rogers' last film. A bitter sweet drama with Rogers as a drifter who befriends a young boy and becomes embroiled with a love-lorn wife and her abusive husband. Hampton had an unusual role for him - a villain, and enjoyed playing against type.

Afterwards, Mr. Hampton spoke for a few minutes about the film. He shared an anecdote about Roy Rogers - in the penultimate scene where he is holding Rogers under the creek water, they did that in a real creek, and Hampton suspected that Rogers picked up some kind of bug from that water because, although he lived for several more years, he was never quite as healthy as he'd been prior to that.



James Hampton

[Child actor Clay O'Brien, by the way, soon after retired from acting to go back to his first love, being a rodeo cowboy, and holds the record of seven Team Roping championships.]

Andrew Prine and Heather Lowe

Actor Andrew Prine and his wife, actress/producer Heather Lowe, spoke for an hour with moderator Bill Ruehlmann, and then answered questions from the audience.

Ruehlmann began by asking Heather how she and Prine had met. "Clean it up a little bit," Andy advised her with a smile, to a round of laughter from the audience. Heather told the story of how she'd gone to a dinner party but had to leave early...and how after an exchange of debate and leg-kicks under the table between the person who was supposed to drive her home and Andy who



Andrew Prine and Heather Lowe

wanted to drive her home, Andy had driven her home. They were married three months later and have been happily married ever since.

Then, Ruehlmann proceeded in chronological order, asking each of them to discuss how they'd gotten started in the business, and carrying on from there.

They each had a wealth of interesting anecdotes to recount about their careers. Heather Lowe told how she moved into producing when she acquired the property of *The Avenging Angel* (from the novel written by Gary Stewart) about the political intrigue of the Mormons during the 1870s, and how she approached Tom Berenger on the set of *Gettysburg* (in which her husband was also filming) and asked him to star in the film.

"I had a lot of bad days on horses," said Andy to an answer from Ruehlmann. In *Bandolero* they shot a scene where he is shot and has to fall off his horse, and then the bandidos are to ride over him - and he's there on the ground while they're riding over him.

They're supposed to ride on either side of him but he "knocked his kneecap sideways and my arm and everything got stomped."

"...I think my life was saved by a stuntman buddy of mine named "Whiz Kid." I was lying there being trampled and he got his horse over me and pulled his horse up on its hind legs and bumped...I can see the other horses bumping off of him..and he held that horse over me...he might have saved my life."



Bandolero



Prine also shared an anecdote, in answer to a question from the audience, about William Shatner, as he'd just made a guest appearance on Shatner's series *Boston Legal*.

"*Boston Legal* is just an easy show to do. Very pleasant with Shatner. I just had some scenes with Shatner. He loves to chitchat just like me. And so we barely had time to shoot anything. We felt they were rudely interrupting us every now and then to get a shot. We go back a long way in the biz so we were talking about everybody. All we did

was gossip and take money. It was pleasant, it was not confronting in any sense. It was business as usual. And very good business on that show, because it's a very smooth operation. Full of talent." Ruhlmann pressed him to talk more about Shatner. Prine laughed and complied.

"I like Bill Shatner. Bill Shatner was a confronting character in the past and no one on Star Trek liked him, wouldn't speak to him, because he was apparently a jerk. But it's so many years ago.

But Bill Shatner consciously says - to me and others - that he made a change. He decided to get grateful for his career and his life - in essence, that's what he said. So he's a very different...I never knew him as the other guy. ... But he was just a [delight.]

Ed Faulkner in Elvis Presley's *Tickle Me*

I had hesitated to ask my own questions of Prine and Lowe because they were science fiction-related and I anticipated having the opportunity later during their film-talks. So after the panel ended I went to the Guest Star Theatre where *Tickle Me* was just ending.



Then Ed Faulkner said a few words about the movie and answered questions from the audience.

Everyone was more interested in his work with John Wayne than in the movie they'd just seen (myself included, it must be admitted.) Faulkner made six films with Wayne: *McLintock!* (1963), *The Green Berets* (1968), *Hellfighters* (1968), *The Undefeated* (1969), *Chisum* (1970) and *Rio Lobo* (1970).

Faulkner revealed that Wayne loved to play chess, and shared an anecdote which I paraphrase: "Duke asked me to play chess and I said sure, and sat down." He then imitated Wayne (quite well) "You've made your first mistake, pilgrim." "But I haven't touched the pieces yet." "You sat down."

Faulkner had nothing but praise for John Wayne, and explained that he'd been very fortunate in his career to work with such stars.

ON THE TOWN:

Ripley's Believe It Or Not Museum and 3/4D Theatre

I went out to a nearby Kentucky Fried Chicken to pick up some supper to munch on during the 6 pm to 7 pm SF TV shown by the Solar Guard. On the drive to the KFC I drove past a building I'd never noticed before: Ripley's Believe It Or Not museum and theatre.



"From prehistoric dinosaurs' eggs to the 3000 year old mummified remains of an Egyptian falcon, From African tribal artifacts to a South American shrunken head, From strands of George Washington's hair and early American slave records to a golf ball driven on the moon."

I was more interested in the 3D and 4D movies they were showing, *Deep Sea* and *Dino Island II*. I'll be going there some time soon to check out the 3D movies with the 4th dimension - wind, water, aromas, etc. Cool!

Solar Guard Video Room



Captain Video

I had time to watch only two shows before I had to head to the panel for Margia Dean and Audrey Dalton. First was an episode of *Captain Video and the Video Rangers*, featuring the first Captain Video, Richard Coogan (soon to be replaced by Al Hodge.)

Next came "The Throwback," an episode of *Science Fiction Theater* which guest-starred Ed Kemmer (more famous as Buzz Corry of *Space Patrol*).

Interestingly, Virginia

Christine (most famous amongst a certain generation as Mrs. Olson of Folgers Coffee fame) starred as the head scientist in the laboratory in which the episode takes place. That's the thing about science fiction - women were always well represented as scientists or reporters...up until the time when it was necessary for them to become damsels in distress.



Science Fiction Theater. The Throwback

Audrey Dalton and Margia Dean

The 7 pm panel consisted of Audrey Dalton and Margia Dean, hosted by Bill Ruehlmann.

Audrey Dalton and Margia Dean Audrey Dean was born in Ireland, moved to London to study at RADA, and arrived by herself in America at the age of 18 in 1952. She was part of the Studio System of the time, which she said helped her career enormously.

Margia Dean had the chance to become an actress very young, but elected to marry -- to young, as she states - instead. After five years she divorced her husband and moved to Hollywood to pursue a career.



Audrey Dalton and Margia Dean waiting for panel to begin
is frequently shown.

Each had some interesting anecdotes to share about their careers and lives. Margia Dean was especially interesting as she had actually been in Cuba - staying at Georg Raft's casino - on the night that Fidel Castro took over.

Audrey Dalton's one science fiction movie is *The Monster That Challenged the World* (1957), and she has seen that many, many times now as she is a guest at science fiction conventions where it

"People like it," pointed out Audrey. "The idea was that this prehistoric monster has laid an egg that has never hatched, and it hatches in the Imperial Canal in California [...] and suddenly there's this enormous thing and the Navy has to get into it...and lots of stuff that you think, "Did we really do that? But we did. But it was fun."

"It took talent to be convincing," pointed out Margia Dean.

"Yes. Yes." agreed Audrey.

"How about working with Tim Holt and Hans Conried?"



Tim Holt and Audrey Dalton

"Well, Hans Conried was the ultimate professional. He was funny as [well]. He did the scientist thing very well...the accent and the whole thing. Tim Holt -- very much like the person he was, a very quiet, restrained gentleman, very well-educated, and it showed. He played the officer absolutely perfectly. He was very supportive. They all were. It was a fun movie. Those things are. You've got to laugh and giggle yourself because it's so fun. And you are appropriately scared when this thing lunges out of the wall..."

Margia Dean's science fiction film is *The Quatermass Experiment*, (also called *The Creeping Unknown*) in which she played the distraught wife of the lone surviving astronaut from a crashed spaceship - who is slowly mutating into something...else.

"That was actually probably the most successful film I was ever in financially [...] Afterwards there was a long series of sequels which I couldn't be in because I had to go stark raving mad in the film. I can modestly say that it takes talent to be halfway convincing when your husband turns into a cactus...or he was a man turning into a cactus. It was fun and exciting."

After the panel ended, I had a choice of going back to the Solar Guard video room to watch more fun shows, or go home. I went home.



Audrey Dalton, Margia Dean and Gene Blottner



The Williamsburg Film Festival: Friday, March 9, 2007

I returned to the Holiday Inn Patriot at 10 am on Friday. I wandered around the Dealer's Room for several minutes - having a chat with Cadet Ed and the rest of the Solar Guard members. I'd received my packet of trading cards on Thursday and on this day had to find my one missing card, that of Buzz Corry. Eventually I completed my set.

Andrew Prine had the most science fiction credits among the guest stars at the Festival - having appeared in *Gemini*



Dealer's Room, Saturday morning before the crush

Man and *The Invaders*, as well as *V*, *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *Deep Space Nine*. I hesitated to approach him in the Dealer's Room, however, because I wanted to be able to record his responses and thought that might disconcert the rest of his fans who'd want to approach him. So I delayed...and delayed...

I then went to the Guest Star Theater in order to watch Heather Lowe's production of *The Avenging Angel* (1995) starring Tom Berenger.



Heather Lowe

Among the many interesting anecdotes Heather shared about the film, as well as comments on the cooperation of the Mormon church with the filming, was one about Charlton Heston, who played Brigham Young in the telefilm:

"I wanted Gregory Peck for [Charlton Heston's] role, and Tom Berenger wanted Charlton Heston. And when you do these kinds of films, you deal. And so, of course he's a brilliant choice. What he did - once he received the role - he called the Mormon church and he said, "I've been offered this role and I want your blessing to play Brigham Young. Now, they knew we were going to do this film, and they thought, well, he played Moses, God, he's played Ben-Hur, so all right, yes."

At the end of the hour I asked Heather to expand a bit on a new film her company has just produced, *Mega Con in Aberdeen*, "The misadventures of a group of American actors headed to a ScottishSci-Fi convention."

She did not want to give away any details, as the film is scheduled to make its debut at the Cannes Film Festival this year, but she was quite pleased with it and knows science fiction fans are going to love it. So I'm looking forward to this!

The 12 pm movie was supposed to have been Audrey Dalton's *The Bounty Killer*. However, Audrey was having relatives coming in who weren't going to arrive til Saturday, so Margia Dean had kindly consented to switch her movie day with Audrey's.

Margia attended the film showing of *Last of the Desperadoes* with her second husband, opera singer Felipe Alvarez, with whom she's been married for more than 40 years.



Margia Dean

Last of the Desperadoes was an interesting film...it

reminded me of *High Noon*. Sheriff Pat Garrett (James Craig) kills Billy the Kid, and then is targeted for revenge by Billy's gang...and none of the townspeople will help him, so he finds it necessary to go on the run.

Margia answered a few questions from the crowd. I asked her a few questions about her production career - which she had mentioned the previous night. Margia was one of the earliest female producers, successfully producing *The Long Rope* (1961) and *Horror of It All* (1963). However, the collapse of Twentieth Century Fox due to the massive failure of *Cleopatra* resulted in a general housecleaning of the current 'regime', which ended her producing career. She then went on to a successful career in private life.

Neil Summers

Neil Summers has been a stunt man for practically his entire life. (He also has one of the largest collections of Western Movie memorabilia in the world) His "Movie Clips with Neil Summers" was very well attended. It began with a 15-minute series of clips of some of his appearances as a stuntman and actor, and then the floor was thrown open to questions. The audience was very interested in his career making spaghetti Westerns in Italy with such actors as Terence Hill.

Summers is still in demand. He's scheduled to work soon on a movie about Winston Churchill in World War II.



Neil Summer

At 3 pm I attended the panel with **Ed Faulkner and James Hampton**, hosted by Mitch Weisberg.



Ed Faulkner, James Hampton and Mitch Weisberg

Ed Faulkner had worked on 6 films with John Wayne, and so was able to share quite a few anecdotes about that American icon. He can do quite a good Wayne impersonation, as well! Faulkner also shared stories about working with Richard Boone on *Have Gun, Will Travel*, and his work on other classic Western TV shows.

James Hampton has had a long career in show-business, but is most well-known for his co-starring role in *F-Troop* with Forrest Tucker and Larry Storch. He also worked with Jimmy

Stewart when he guest-starred on the TV series *Hawkins*, when Stewart was 66. Hampton shared a few anecdotes, including one that revealed how much class Stewart had.

Stewart and Hampton had just finished filming a scene featuring them both. Next were specific close-ups of Jimmy Stewart, and then would be close-ups of Hampton. The director wanted to let Stewart go, and asked Hampton if he'd mind. Hampton said of course not. However, when the director told Stewart he could go home for the night, Stewart refused. Regardless of the fact that he wouldn't be on camera, he was going to stay and provide Hampton with the appropriate dialog and facial reactions.

Both Faulkner and Hampton commented on the class of the stars they worked with in their heyday - John Wayne, Jimmy Stewart, etc. They all knew their lines and arrived on the set on-time, etc., which is apparently more than could be said for some stars today.

This Savage Land

I attended *This Savage Land* starring Barry Sullivan, Kathryn Hays (Gem in *Star Trek*, Andrew Prine, and George C. Scott. Unfortunately, Mr. Prine was not available after the film.



Before going out to dinner, I headed back to the Dealer's Room. On the way I saw Festival-attendee Robinette George doing some knitting in one of the rooms, and went in to talk to her. She had suggested to the Festival organizers that she could hold a knitting class for any interested persons. (It's a bane at any convention or film festival that an individual's spouse may not always be particularly interested in what's going on - so it's always good to have other activities for them. Of course Williamsburg is full of shops, Civil War and Revolutionary War sites, etc., but if you don't want to leave the hotel....). Mrs. George hopes to make this a feature next year as well.

After I expressed an interest in her knitting, she shared with me that she did knitting for The Shawl Ministry, which knits shawls for those people who are losing loved ones to terminal illnesses. I thought this was a good cause so I mention it here.

I then continued on to the Dealer's Room and chatted with Martin Grams, Jr., author of several books on Old Time Radio and Classic TV, including *The I Love A Mystery Companion*, *Suspense: Twenty Years of Thrills and Chills* and he is currently finished a book on *The Green Hornet*. His TV work also includes the *Have Gun, Will Travel Companion* and *The Alfred Hitchcock Presents Companion*.



I tried to nudge him towards working on an *X Minus One Companion*, but he wasn't having any, unfortunately...he was more receptive to a *Vincent Price on Radio* companion...

Solar Guard Video Room

I was able to watch two episodes of Tom Corbett in the video room, before it was time to head to the David Huddleston/Richard Anderson panel. The episode was one from the tail end of the series and featured Jack Grimes as T.J. Thistle (Grimes had replaced Jan Merlin (Roger Manning) when that actor left the series - much to the dismay of his many fans. T.J. Thistle was no Roger Manning - and Grimes was no Merlin!)



Ed Bryce as Captain Steve Strong



Al Markin as Astro, Jack Grimes as T.J. Thistle and Frankie Thomas as Tom Corbett

David Huddleston and Richard Anderson

Before the panel with Huddleston and Anderson, they showed the 10-minute film, *Revielle*, (2004) which starred Huddleston and James McEachin.



Set in a retirement home, Huddleston plays a Navy man who every morning raises an American flag up the flag-pole, McEachin plays a new inhabitant, an Army man, and the two men engage in a series of one-upmanships regarding medals, etc., until its touching conclusion.



David Huddleston and Richard Anderson

Among many anecdotes that David Huddleston shared was one about Mel Brooks and *Blazing Saddles* (1974) When Huddleston was originally offered the role of Olson Johnson he turned it down because he had only two lines and nothing much to do.

Mel Blanc called him up and said, "You would turn down a Mel Brooks picture?" After Huddleston explained why, Brooks asked him to come to the studio to have lunch the next day.

The next day they had lunch, then they back to Brooks' office, Brooks laid the script on the desk and said: "There's a good line, you want that one?" "Well, sure." He did this all the way through the script. And if you ever see the picture again, you will notice that I have all the laugh lines, all the way through. Then, about two weeks into the picture, John Hillerman (Howard Johnson) said to me, "Ya



know, when I read for this part...[inaudible on my tape, but it got a big laugh] "I said, Jeez, I don't know, maybe he rewrote the thing." Another big laugh.

Both Richard Anderson also shared many anecdotes. At the end of the panel the audience was allowed to ask questions. Someone asked about *Forbidden Planet* and Richard explained that it had started out as 'just a job' and 50 years later for the anniversary he and the rest of the cast had been brought together in San Diego one weekend, and he'd signed 40,000 autographs. He ended by pointing out that several fine actors had gotten their start on *Forbidden Planet*. Ruehlman then pointed to someone near the front of the room who wanted to ask a question:

"I was very fortunate to work in *Forbidden Planet*. I played an extra. [At this point, laughter from those around him made him inaudible. Ruehlman then introduced him as James Best]. I had no lines and the big monster killed me. ... He [the director] didn't give me any lines or anything!"



Anderson reacting to Best

"James, I got killed by the same guy."

"Yeah, but you talked before you died!"

Much of this interchange was obscured by appreciative laughter. The expression on Richard Anderson's face was priceless as he and James Best had their repartee going.



Actually, James was misremembering - he is clearly seen above in the penultimate shot of the movie, alive and happy - but still with no lines. (It may have been that his death scene was filmed, but then not used...) In any event, his comments made for a

better story!

After the panel ended, the stars posed on stage for people to take photographs. I went forward and snapped this shot of Ed Faulkner talking with James Best, and a couple of shots of Richard Anderson and David Huddleston.

With the panel over, I again had the option to go watch more classic SF TV in the Solar Guard video room - and I had forgotten that they had a telescope and were going to do some stargazing later - but in any event I elected to go home instead.

The Williamsburg Film Festival: Saturday, March 10, 2007

This was the last day of the festival. There were three films shown, with the actors answering questions afterwards, and the the Banquet in which all the guest stars and festival guests were entertained by such people as Sterling Riggs (Elvis impersonator), Eli Barsi, and Ed and Bobbi Beard.



Margia and Felipe: With Love CD

The day before, in talking with Margia after her film, she mentioned that she and her husband had produced a music CD (her husband is an opera singer). She had only one left - I asked her to save it for me. Then as events went on I had forgotten all about it. So the first thing I did today was go to her in the Dealer's Room - and she had indeed saved it for me.

I then asked her if had enjoyed the convention experience, and she was enthusiastic with her praise of the organizers of the Williamsburg Film Festival (take a bow, Bill Sasser), as they had exhibited 'true Southern hospitality.'



I then went to the Guest Star Theater to see Richard Anderson in *The Curse of the Faceless Man* (1958).

Richard Anderson: The Curse of the Faceless Man

While excavating the city of Pompeii (buried during a volcanic eruption in 79 AD), archaeologists find a stone-encrusted body, wearing a bronze medallion bearing a strange Etruscan inscription. Archaeologist Carlo Fiorillo (Luis Van Rooten), speculates the robust body may hold some life; medical researcher Paul Mallon (Richard Anderson) scoffs at the idea. "But people left alone with the seemingly petrified "faceless man" keep dying of crushed skulls; and Paul's artist fiancée Tina starts having strange visions..."

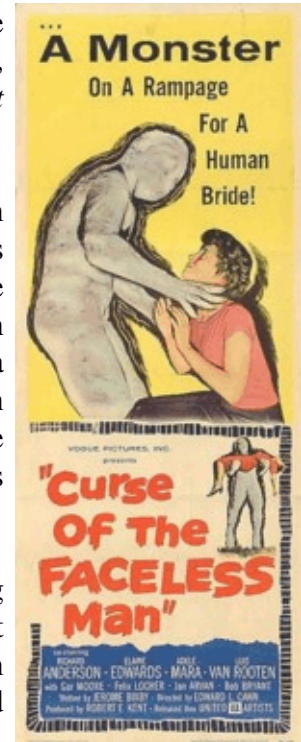
This movie is science fantasy, not science fiction, and indeed reminded me of nothing so much as an episode of *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*. In which, coincidentally, Anderson had a starring role as a tragic villain in the *Night Strangler* made-for-TV movie sequel.

As with most 1950s science fiction movies, the tale is narrated in documentary fashion...and is actually quite tragic, if viewed in one way, as the "volcano man" is actually the slave Quintullus Maximus, who fell in love with a Roman noble lady, and returns after a thousand years to save her from the eruption (as the anniversary of that day is quite close.) Once he achieves what he thinks is his mission, he disintegrated in the water.

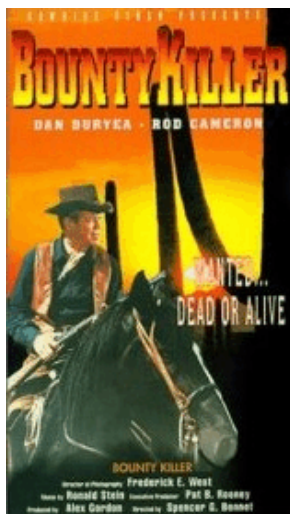


Richard spoke after the movie, explaining how he'd got the part, right after the great

The Long Hot Summer starring Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward and Orson Welles. It sounded like it'd be fun, so he agreed to do it. I asked him if he'd gone into the water at the end of the movie himself, and he just laughed. First off, they shot it in only six days, and second, that water was cold, so he was fine for a stunt man to do it.



The night before, he had revealed that he was a tremendous history enthusiast, and indeed does work for the **California Indian Manpower Consortium**, **National Fragile X Foundation**, and is on the **Board of Directors of Veterans Park**.



I asked him, therefore, if he was going to see the new *USS Monitor* center that had just opened that very weekend at the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, and he confirmed that he was indeed staying for a couple of extra days, as the event organizers were going to take some of the guest stars on a tour of the many historical sites in the Williamsburg-Yorktown-Jamestown Historic Triangle.

Audrey Dalton in The Bounty Killer

I then attended the showing of *The Bounty Killer*, (1965) starring Dan Duryea and Audrey Dalton. Quite a good little film, showing how the innocent and gentlemanly Dan Duryea transforms into a cold-hearted killer..despite his love for Audrey



Dalton. He is finally killed in the end by a new bounty killer, so the circle will continue...

After the film of course Audrey shared some anecdotes, including the fact that the character who shoots Duryea at the end of the film was played by Duryea's son.

Coming out of the theater, I saw James Hampton and his wife in the lobby, talking with a fan. (All of the guest stars were very friendly and approachable, posing for photos, etc.)

I asked him how he'd liked making *Condorman*, and he related an anecdote about how Michael Crawford had nearly drowned in the Seine. In the movie, he lands in the water in his Condorman outfit and Hampton has to pull him out, but because of the strength of the current and the water-logged outfit...Hampton couldn't get him into the boat and instead struggled with him to shore, while everyone else on the crew merely watched, not realizing what was happening. And then they didn't even use the shot, because it had taken so long!



(*Condorman* was a Disney film, in which cartoonist Michael Crawford is turned into a costumed hero by James Hampton's character, so that he can rescue Tia Carrerra from the dastardly Oliver Reed. I don't think it was a success financially, but I liked it.



David Huddleston

Next, we saw a *The Waltons* episode, "The Literary Man," starring David Huddleston. It was one of the earliest episodes, and depicted how John-Boy Walton truly became a writer.

Huddleston plays a writer who left home in search of the "big story," and with his anecdotes impresses John-Boy, who can't leave home because his family needs him. Huddleston finally reveals that he actually hasn't done any writing, he's always talked his stories away, and that instead of leaving home to find the big

story, John-Boy should consider that it might be right there on Walton's Mountain.

I was never a fan of this program- I preferred and still prefer action/adventure fare, but this was a nice little episode and Huddleston did a good job.

I did see one Walton's episode many years ago - I don't know why - but the ending has stuck in my

mind for over 20 years. Apparently it's just after Hitler rises to power in Germany, so all the inhabitants of Walton's Mountain decide to take exception to some German immigrants living near them.

They pile up all the German books in a bonfire, but before they light it John-Boy brings over their German neighbor and asks him to read the opening page of one of the books. Turns out the book they were about to burn - without being able to understand what it was - was the Bible. So the crowd is duly chastened...and leave quietly. Probably the only book in 1933 USA that could have done that deed, but still a relevant story today, when censorship is rampant to ban or destroy books - even if you haven't read them.

I asked Mr. Huddleston also if he were going to go see the USS Monitor, and of course he was. Probably most of the guests at each festival stay a few extra days to take in everything that Williamsburg and the Historic Triangle have to offer.



Model of the USS *Monitor* Center

I look forward to next year's festival!