



THE MUSEUM OF WESTERN FILM HISTORY

Hopalong Cassidy Exhibit



Hopalong Cassidy is a fictional cowboy hero created in 1904 by the author Clarence E. Mulford, who wrote a series of popular short stories and novels, the saga of the Bar-20, featuring the character.

In 1935 Hollywood introduced *Hop-a-long Cassidy* to movie-going audiences. The silver screen Hoppy appeared as a cowboy hero who did not smoke, drink or swear and who always let the bad guy start the fight; a character portrayal that differed significantly from Mulford's pulp fictional character who was a hard-drinking, rough-living wrangler.

Actor William Boyd had made a name for himself in the early 1920s, his great looks capturing the hearts of many female fans. Although Boyd never branded a cow or mended a fence, he became indelibly associated with the Hopalong Cassidy character he created in sixty-six "Hoppy" films. Thirty-one of these films had scenes shot in and around Lone Pine including many scenes on the Anchor Ranch, a local working ranch that stood in for Hoppy's Bar-20 Ranch. The Anchor Ranch is still a working ranch and is located adjacent to the Museum.

The film company was on location in the area so often that Boyd rented a house on Tuttle Creek Road for his wife Grace Boyd. It is known to this day as the "Hoppy Cabin." The cabin, used in many of the films, still looks much as it did during those many years of filming.

The films were complemented by a total of 140 radio broadcasts beginning in 1948. Anticipating the popularity of the new medium of television, Boyd purchased the rights to the Hopalong Cassidy character, books and films.

As portrayed on the screen, the white-haired William Boyd, aka Hopalong Cassidy, was usually clad in black cowboy dress, astride his white horse, Topper. He was reserved and well spoken, with a fine sense of fair play. He was often called upon to intercede when dishonest characters were taking advantage of honest citizens.



Capitalizing on Hoppy's popularity, Boyd, who had a great sense of marketing, approved a wide variety of licensed merchandise. In 1950, Hopalong Cassidy was featured on the first lunchbox to bear an image, causing sales for Aladdin Industries to jump from 50,000 to 600,000 in one year. More than 100 companies in 1950 manufactured over 2500 products with sales of over \$60 million for Hopalong Cassidy products, including Hopalong Cassidy wristwatches, trash cans,



cups, children's dinnerware, Topps trading cards, a comic strip, comic books, pillows, roller skates, soap, jackknives and cowboy outfits. Many of these items are featured in the exhibit. All TV, theatrical and merchandising rights, name and image, of Hopalong Cassidy's are today held by company called U.S. Television.

The Museum's exhibit also presents a wide range of movie posters and promotional advertising for the Hopalong Cassidy movies that were released.

While the contents of the Museum's exhibit were acquired from varied sources, the vast majority came from the collection of Yvonne Marshall, a life long collector and fan of William Boyd and Hopalong Cassidy. The Museum is honored to have received this donated collection and to be entrusted with its care. A number of items are also on display courtesy of U.S. Television.

Exhibit: www.lonepinefilmhistorymuseum.org/Hopalong-Cassidy/hopalong-cassidy-exhibit.html

Bios: <http://www.lonepinefilmhistorymuseum.org/hopalong-cassidywilliam-boyd-bios.html>



Topper was not only Hopalong's horse, but he was William Boyd's own horse. Boyd married Grace Bradley in 1937 and he acquired Topper that same year. The white stallion was named by way of Grace after her favorite book series, "Topper," written by Thorne Smith. Throughout the years, Topper remained Hopalong Cassidy's favorite horse because of the fact that he was a trustworthy animal, noted and admired for his constant cooperation, not only with his owner, but also with children who would sometimes pull on his mane and other such things. He died in 1961 at 26 years of age. Topper is buried in Los Angeles Pet Memorial Park, Calabasas, Los Angeles County California, USA

Books:



Hopalong Cassidy: On the Page, On the Screen covers each of Mulford's books and each of the Cassidy theatrical films in full detail. A comprehensive index enables readers interested in almost anything linked to the books or films - including eventual stars like Robert Mitchum, George Reeves, Jan Clayton and Barbara Britton - to find the relevant material instantly. (520 Pages. Available in Museum Gift Shop. \$25.00