



# Pardon My Sarong

**"If you want me to go, I'll stay as long as you like."**

Hello and welcome to our fourth newsletter.

It's now June and thankfully the weather is starting to get decent, although May was a bit of a wash out, either raining, cloudy, hot and muggy, We are now at the stage where holidays are being booked, BBQ's are being made ready and school holidays are nearly upon us.

Remember. This magazine is for you. So if you want any articles included that you have written yourself, then send them in.

## WEBSITE FRENZY UPDATE

Our website theflyingdeuces.co.uk is coming along nicely. We have completed the section on Abbott and Costello Filmography with film bios, and are starting on the Laurel and Hardy section.

Our Leading Ladies section is getting ladies added at a decent pace. This section has their life stories and photos and makes a great addition to the whole site.



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

In The Navy. 2-3

Lynn Baggett. 4-5

Did you Know. 6-7

Junes Crossword. 8-9

May Crossword Answers. 10

The Battle of the Century.

Laurel and Hardy Movie 11-13



## IN THE NAVY—ABBOTT AND COSTELLO

In the Navy is a 1941 American comedy film directed by Arthur Lubin and starring the team of Abbott and Costello alongside Dick Powell, Claire Dodd and The Andrews Sisters. Produced and distributed by Universal Pictures, it was the second service comedy based on the peacetime draft of 1940. The comedy team appeared in two other service comedies in 1941, before the United States entered the war: Buck Privates released in January and Keep 'Em Flying released in November.

Popular crooner Russ Raymond abandons his career at its peak and joins the Navy using his real name, Tommy Halstead. However, Dorothy Roberts, a reporter,

discovers his identity and follows him in the hopes of photographing him and revealing his identity to the world.

Aboard the battleship Alabama, Tommy meets up with Smokey and Pomeroy, who help hide him from Dorothy, who hatches numerous schemes in an attempt to photograph Tommy/Russ being a sailor. Pomeroy is in love with Patty Andrews, sends her numerous fan letters, and tries to impress her with false tales of his physique and his naval rank. Eventually, Patty discovers that Pomeroy is only a baker, and Pomeroy spends much of the movie attempting to win her affection.

*"I saw what I saw when I saw it!" Costello*



## IN THE NAVY—ABBOTT AND COSTELLO

After Buck Privates became a big hit, the studio rushed Abbott and Costello into a second service comedy. In the Navy was filmed from April 8, 1941 through May 9, 1941. This was actually after the team had already completed Hold That Ghost. The latter was held back for revisions and the naval comedy was released as the team's second starring vehicle.

There was, however, one problem before it could be released: when the film was screened for the Navy, officers were offended by the sequence where Pomeroy (Costello) impersonates a captain and puts the battleship through a series of madcap maneuvers. Since the sequence was the climax of the film, it could not be edited out. The studio solved the problem by making the sequence Pomeroy's dream. This caused the film to go over its original budget of \$335,000. Portions of the film were shot in the Coachella Valley, California.

Abbott and Costello perform the "Lemon Bit", a crooked shell game routine; the math routine, "13 x 7 = 28"; and "Buzzing the Bee" (called "Sons of Neptune"), an initiation routine where the team tries to trick the other into asking to be sprayed in the face. During this sequence, Costello began laughing and spit his water on the deck. Director Arthur Lubin left it in the film.

Reviews from critics were positive. Bosley Crowther of The New York Times wrote: "Maybe they aren't quite as funny as they were in Buck Privates, but even fair with Abbott and Costello is good enough for now ... Yes, the boys make something of In the Navy in spite of the fact that there is very little there. Certainly the Andrews Sisters and Mr. Powell, with their flat songs, would not be missed. They simply get in the way when you want to be watching Lou and Bud, who are the show." A reviewer in Variety reported that "Abbott and Costello provide constant laughs with their zany routines." Film Daily wrote, "The picture is timely, tuneful and highly amusing screenfare for all audiences." Harrison's Reports wrote: "It may not be as hilarious as 'Buck Privates' since some of the gags are already known; yet it is a very good comedy, with many amusing situations."



## IN THE NAVY—ABBOTT AND COSTELLO

### Cast

Bud Abbott as Smokey Adams  
 Lou Costello as Pomeroy Watson  
 Dick Powell as Thomas Halstead  
 Claire Dodd as Dorothy Roberts  
 The Andrews Sisters as Themselves  
 Dick Foran as Dynamite Dugan  
 Billy Lenhart as Butch  
 Kenneth Brown as Buddy  
 Shemp Howard as Dizzy





## THE LEADING LADIES.

We will have a page (or two) dedicated to the Leading Ladies, and possibly other actors who starred alongside our main character's Abbott & Costello and Laurel & Hardy.

This month we have Lynn Baggett



## LYNN BAGGETT

Lynn Baggett was born Ruth Baggett in Wichita Falls, Texas on May 10, 1923, to David L. Baggett, who worked in the oil industry and Ruth Baggett (nee Simmons), who worked as a stenographer. Following her high school graduation in Dallas, she was discovered at a department store by a Warner Bros. agent and signed with the studio despite not having any experience in acting. The studio promoted her as a beauty queen, giving her minor roles as singers, party girls, waitresses and nurses.

Years later however, Baggett was still receiving non-major roles and was eventually released from her contract in 1946. She signed with Universal shortly after, and immediately got a her first major role in *The Time of Their Lives* (1946). The recruits of Camp Haan described her as adorable, amicable and amorous, leading her getting coined "the Triple A girl".

She appeared in a bit part in her first film, 1941's *Manpower*, starring Edward G. Robinson, George Raft and Marlene Dietrich. Baggett spent the next several years in a number of uncredited roles including a chorus girl in *Murder on the Waterfront* (1943) and the oldest daughter of the title character in *The Adventures of Mark Twain* (1944), and in her first film noir feature, *Mildred Pierce* (1945), she's the dark-haired waitress who gets into an argument in an early scene about stealing tips. Her biggest role was as the wife of the murdered Mr Phillips in *DOA* (1950). She however, only appears in two short scenes.

Baggett was criticised for being difficult to work with and lacking intelligence. Arthur Laurents, playwright, said of her: "She was very sweet, and very dumb". One producer's wife described her as being "foolish, with no brains at all." She got in trouble with her studio due to her alcoholism and cocaine use. Despite her acting ability, she was also condemned for her lack of screen charisma or presence.

Baggett married Polish-born movie producer Sam Spiegel (21 years older than Baggett) in 1948. Spiegel and Baggett were in an unhappy marriage full of fierceness and dishonesty. In November 1953, Baggett went to court asking for \$3,685 per month in temporary alimony, claiming that Spiegel had abandoned her two years earlier. 2 months later, Spiegel was ordered to pay her \$500 in monthly payments.

Spiegel later alleged that Baggett had destroyed his property, including damaging most of his artwork collection and his suits. Baggett was in an affair with Irwin Shaw and John Huston, while Spiegel was busy working on *The African Queen* (1951).

They divorced 7 years later in 1955, 3 months after Baggett's release from prison following her conviction for felony hit-and-run. During the evening of July 7, 1954, Baggett was driving a station wagon which she had borrowed from an acquaintance from Warner Bros., when she crashed into the rear of another car near Waring and Orlando Avenues in Los Angeles. The car she hit was filled with young boys returning from a day trip to a campsite. The force of the crash killed nine year-old Joel Watnick who died of his injuries when he hit the pavement. Another boy, five year-old Anthony Fell, was also seriously injured.

After briefly examining the scene, Baggett claimed she "blacked out" in fear, before leaving the scene. Baggett drove several miles before reaching a movie theatre where she calmed herself. Police searched for her car for the next 2 days, before discovering it in a San Francisco repair shop and immediately arrested her once she came to collect the car. She was later charged with manslaughter, leaving a scene of an accident, and was convicted of felony hit-and-run. In December of that year she was sentenced to 60 days in county jail and placed on three years' probation.

Baggett had a history of severe depression, substance abuse and mental problems. She attempted suicide from sleeping pills in June 1959, but called the telephone operator for help moments before passing out and was saved by police who had to enter by removing the hinges from the back door. Later that year, it was found she was suffering from paralysis due to drug addiction and diagnosed as a "chronic depressed neurotic". There were reports an early childhood head injury may have caused Baggett's adult mental issues, however it remains unclear. She was deeply affected by the death of her mother (whom she was very close to) in 1957.

Two months after aborting suicide, she claimed her foldaway bed had collapsed on top of her, trapping her underneath for six days. Baggett arrived at the hospital dehydrated and malnourished, and was paralyzed from the knees down. Many did not believe her story, assuming it was made up, after a

## LYNN BAGGETT

friend contradicted it, stating Baggett was fine a few days before.

On 23 March 1960, she was found dead in her apartment with the cause of death being a barbiturate overdose. It was ruled a suicide, however close friends of Baggett believed it was an accidental overdose as she sent a happy note to them not long before saying she was on the path to recovery and was being taken care of. Spiegel paid for her funeral, despite not attending.

*The Time of Their Lives* 1946 with Lynne Baggett as June Prescott. *The Time of Their Lives* is a 1946 American fantasy comedy film directed by Charles Barton and starring the comedic duo Abbott and Costello alongside Marjorie Reynolds, Gale Sondergaard and Binnie Barnes. It was produced and distributed by Universal Pictures.

In 1780, master tinker Horatio Prim arrives at the Kings Point estate of Tom Danbury. Although Horatio has failed to raise enough money to buy Danbury's housemaid, Nora O'Leary out of indentured servitude, he carries a letter of commendation from Gen. George Washington that he hopes will persuade Danbury to let them marry. Unfortunately, Horatio has a romantic rival in Danbury's devious butler, Cuthbert Greenway, who tries to prevent Horatio from presenting his letter.

Nora, however, rushes off to show the letter to Danbury, but she inadvertently overhears Danbury discussing his part in Benedict Arnold's plot. Danbury seizes Nora and hides the letter in a secret compartment in the mantel clock. Danbury's fiancée, Melody Allen, standing outside the window, witnesses this betrayal and enlists Horatio's help to ride off and warn Washington's army. But American troops on their way to arrest Tom overrun the estate, loot it and set it ablaze. Melody and Horatio

are mistakenly shot as traitors, and their bodies are cast into a well.

Their souls are condemned to remain bound to the estate until their innocence can be proved. For the next 166 years the ghosts of Horatio and Melody roam the grounds of the estate. In 1946, after the estate has been rebuilt and restored with much of its original furnishings, playwright Sheldon Gage invites his fiancée, June Prescott, her Aunt Millie, and his psychiatrist, Dr. Ralph Greenway, a descendant of Cuthbert, to spend the weekend. They are greeted by the clairvoyant maid, Emily, who senses that the grounds are haunted. Ghosts Horatio and Melody have some fun with this idea and scare the guests in various ways - especially Greenway, whom Horatio at first mistakes for Cuthbert.

Horatio and Melody also find themselves frightened by modern inventions like the electric light and the radio. These supernatural events prompt the newcomers to hold a seance led by Emily. From clues offered by Horatio, Melody and Tom's repentant spirit, they discern the identities of the ghosts and the existence of the letter which can free them.



## DID YOU KNOW !!!!!

The official date of death of Mr. Laurel and Mr. Hardy:

Hardy: Aug 7, 1957.

Laurel: Feb 23, 1965.

$8 \times 7 = 56$ .  $2 \times 23 = 46$ .  $56 - 46 = 10$ . Laurel was 75. Hardy was 65.  $75 - 65 = 10$ .

Hardy died at 65 in '57, which is 75 backwards, Laurel died at 75 in '65, which is the age when Hardy died in '57, which is 75 backwards, which is the age when Laurel died, in '65, at age 75, which is '57 backwards, which is when Hardy died, at age 65, to infinity to the tenth power, which is how long Laurel & Hardy will continue entertaining a world in need of laughter ... if we have anything to do with it!

At one point, Stan Laurel had married his first wife once, his second wife twice, and his third wife three times. 1-2-3. Then he spoiled that arithmetic progression, but created a different symmetry. He went back and married his second wife, a third time, and concluded by marrying his fourth wife once. 1-3-3-1. What does this mean? TWICE TWO? Maybe TWICE THREE? You tell us. Perhaps Oliver Hardy had the answer in SONS OF THE DESERT when he said, "I never realized that such a deplorable condition existed in your home."

If it wasn't for an accident Oliver suffered cooking a leg of lamb, Stan Laurel would never have been coaxed into taking over his role in a forthcoming film. Stan Laurel might have continued contentedly as a writer and director and Leo McCarey would not have noticed the comedy chemistry which resulted from the chance pairings of Stan and Babe in those early Hal Roach comedies.

According to Movie Mirror (1933), Oliver Hardy bought the rights to their famous signature tune, Cuckoo, from the composer Marvin Hatley for \$25. "I thought it was funny" said Stan.

By the time they produced their first true Laurel & Hardy film, Ollie was already thirty-five and Stanley was thirty-seven.

Hardy's most famous catchphrase is often misquoted, "Well, here's another nice mess you've gotten us into." The incorrect "another fine mess" comes from the name of one of their short films, made in 1930.

Stan's daughter, Lois, was briefly considered for the role of the orphan girl in Pack Up Your Troubles. By the time of filming, it was determined that Lois looked too old for the role. When Lois was younger she used to dislike Ollie as he always seemed to bully her Dad in their films, and persuaded Stan to incorporate a 'revenge' scene at the end of One Good Turn, where Stan finally turns the tables on Ollie. Jerry Lewis once offered Stan \$100,000 to write for him on a part-time basis. Stan declined the offer.

Ollie's favourite pastime was golf. Among his frequent golfing partners were Bing Crosby, W.C. Fields, Babe Ruth and Chico Marx. Stan's favourite pastime was fishing, especially salmon fishing in northern California. As his daughter Lois put it, "He loved it when the fish would put up a bit of a fight with him."

In addition to fishing, Stan's other interests included raising ducks and hydroponic gardening (a process in which plants are grown in chemical solutions rather than soil). He once successfully cross-bred a potato and an onion, but couldn't get anyone to sample the results.

Stan was married four times. His marriage to actress Lois Neilson (1926-1936) produced a daughter, Lois Jr., in 1927. Stan's first wife sometimes served as his personal business manager and handled all of his business dealings with Hal Roach. His stormiest marriage to Iliana Shuvalova, a Russian opera singer, lasted only a year.

Oliver was married three times. His final marriage was with Lucille Jones, a script girl that he had met during the filming of The Flying Deuces. It lasted from 1940 until his death in 1957.

Most fans know that the team's 1932 short The Music Box was honoured with an Academy Award for Best Short Subject. What some don't know is that 1935's Tit for Tat also received a nomination in the same category.

The original preview prints of The Bohemian Girl featured Thelma Todd in the prominent role of the Gypsy Queen. After Thelma's mysterious death in December 1935, some of her scenes were scrapped and new footage was shot.

## DID YOU KNOW !!!

A monkey plays the role of Mickey Mouse in *Babes In Toyland*, one of the few times you're likely to see an appearance by a Disney character in a non-Disney film. Walt Disney himself was a Laurel and Hardy fan, as well as a close friend to Hal Roach.

Stan was instrumental in the career of the young Marcel Marceau. After seeing Marceau perform in Paris in 1950, Stan praised him as an unsung genius and helped Marceau gain attention in the French press.

Hardy played the Tin Man in a 1925 silent version of *The Wizard Of Oz*.

Name' actors who appeared in Laurel and Hardy films: Jean Harlow, Robert Mitchum, Alan Hale Sr., Sidney Toler, Peter Cushing, Elisha Cook, Jr., Vivian Blaine, Margaret Dumont and Jean Parker

Blake Edwards, known for his *PINK PANTHER* films with Peter Sellers, dedicated his 1965 film *The Great Race* to "Mr. Laurel and Mr. Hardy", while Kurt Vonnegut dedicated his novel *Slapstick* to "Arthur Stanley Jefferson and Norvell Hardy, two angels of my time."

How did Stan and Ollie get together in the first place? They had appeared together by chance in an earlier film called *THE LUCKY DOG*, but it was not until each had joined Hal Roach that their teaming began. They were appearing in the same films at Roach when director/supervisor Leo McCarey recognized the comic contrast between them and encouraged their teamwork. They first appeared in something resembling their eventual format in a 1927 release called *DUCK SOUP*.

*THE MUSIC BOX* (1932) brought Laurel & Hardy an Oscar. The idea of steps was also used in one of their silents, *HATS OFF*, no copy of which is known to exist.

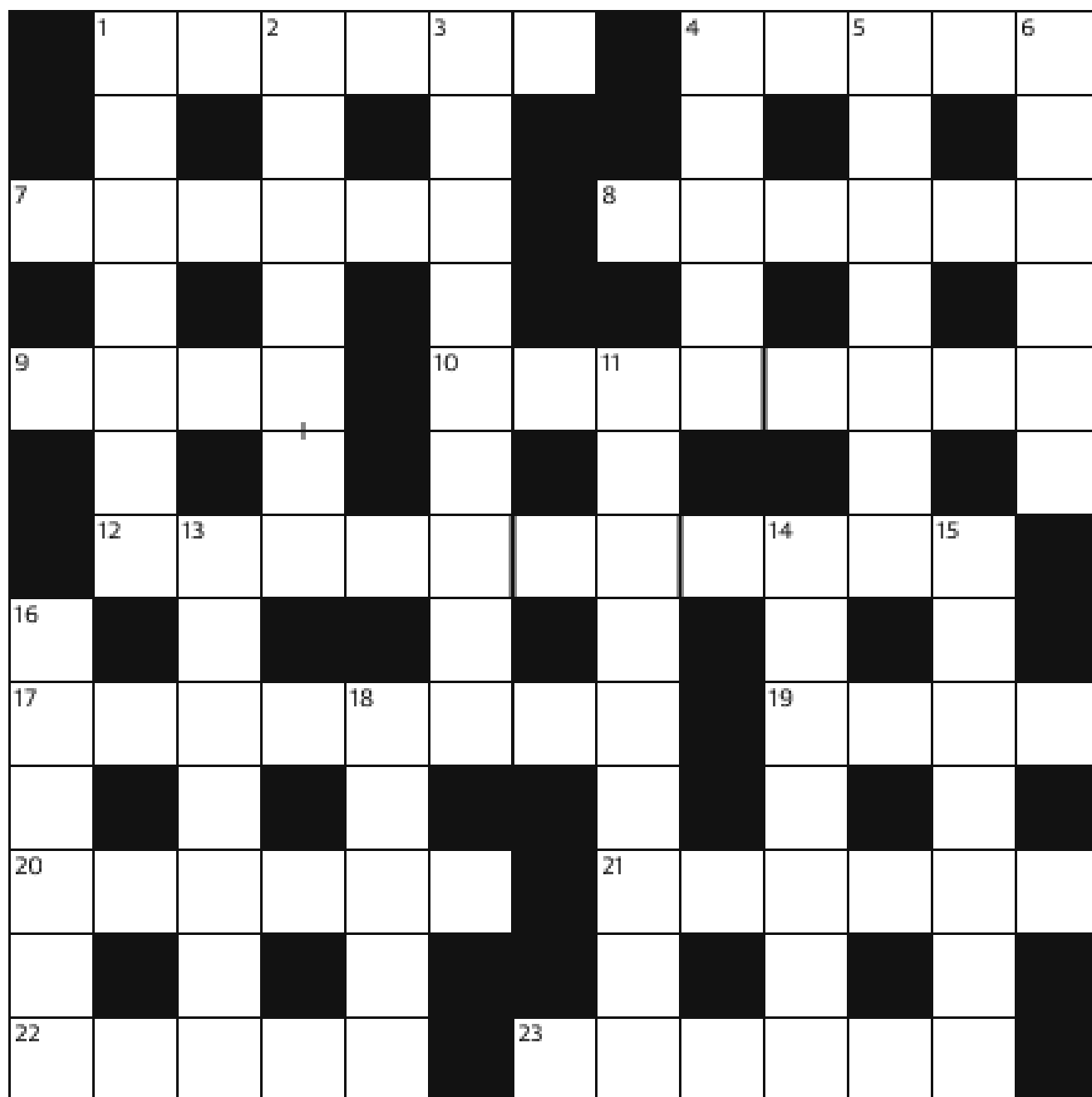
Including quest appearances, Laurel & Hardy made 106 films together. This number does not include films in which Laurel directed Hardy, newsreels, home movies or TV.

A few times, Stan and Ollie appeared together on TV: They were guests on a BBC show hosted by bandleader Henry Hall in 1953 and in the following year they were the subjects of *THIS IS YOUR LIFE* in America. In 1955 - in what was to be their last engagement as a team - they contributed a filmed insert for another BBC show, *THIS MUSIC HALL*.

Laurel & Hardy did not always do their own stunts. By the time of their teaming, they were approaching middle age and of course were becoming too valuable to risk. Stan Laurel was sometimes doubled by Ham Kimsey; Oliver Hardy's usual double was Cy Slocum, though a still from *SWISS MISS* shows Charlie Phillips performing this task.



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## CROSSWORD FOR JUNE



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## Across

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- 1** Serving size for tea, perhaps (6)
- 4** Whippersnapper (5)
- 7** Post-AI (anag) - dialect (6)
- 8** Absent-minded - like some cubicles (6)
- 9** Rod's counterpart in the eye (4)
- 10** Damaging precipitation with low pH (4,4)
- 12** Feeling involving obligation (5,2,4)
- 17** Quartz variety (8)
- 19** Meat-and-tomato pasta sauce (4)
- 20** One born in the years following WW2 (6)
- 21** Antagonism - hostility (6)
- 22** Last Greek letter (5)
- 23** Bidding (6)

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## Down

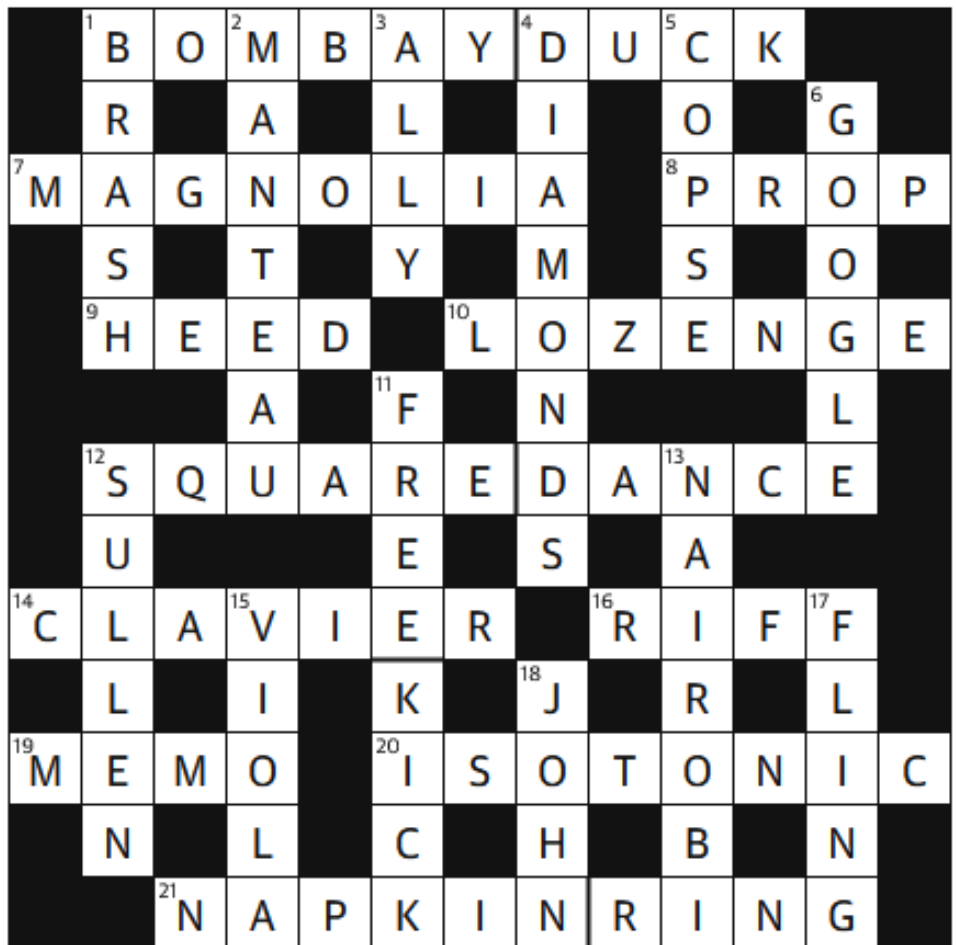
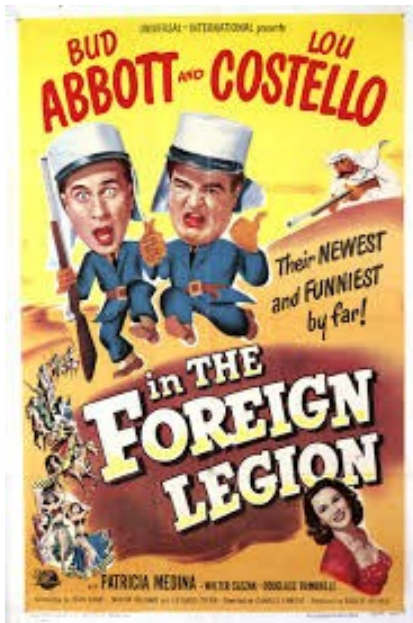
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- 1** Goat - yellowy brown - car-washing leather (7)
- 2** Radio show with often angry participants (5-2)
- 3** Ashley pun (anag) - not in good form (9)
- 4** UK's tallest building, The \_\_ (5)
- 5** Intransigent - resolute (7)
- 6** Green sheen on a metal (6)
- 11** Enamour (9)
- 13** Carbuncle (7)
- 14** Country which declared independence in 1990, recognized 1991 (7)
- 15** Ingredient of tzatziki and raita (7)
- 16** Giant woody grass (6)
- 18** Cackling carnivore (5)

## FAN CLUBS

We will be listing other fan clubs relating to the famous double acts, both local to the UK and world-wide.

## MAYS CROSSWORD ANSWERS



## THE BATTLE OF THE CENTURY.

The Battle of the Century is a 1927 American silent short film starring comedy double act Laurel and Hardy, who appeared in 107 films between 1921 and 1951. The film entered the public domain in the United States in 2023.

Facing financial hardship, Ollie orchestrates a boxing match between Stan and Thunderclap Callahan, offering a cash prize of \$100 to the victor. Stan, fighting under the alias "Canvasback Clump," inadvertently knocks out Callahan in the initial round. However, Stan's refusal to return to his corner prevents the referee from completing the ten-count, allowing Callahan to recover and retaliate, ultimately overpowering Stan.

Following the match's chaotic conclusion, a disillusioned Ollie encounters an insurance salesman who convinces him to invest the meager winnings in an insurance policy on Stan, with the stipulation that Stan must sustain an injury for Ollie to profit. In a misguided attempt to fulfill this requirement, Ollie orchestrates a scenario involving a banana peel on a sidewalk. However, the plan backfires when a pastry chef becomes the unintended victim of the slippery hazard, leading to a comical altercation involving pies that quickly escalates into a neighborhood-wide skirmish.

The Battle of the Century is renowned for its extensive use of cream pies, with estimates ranging from over 3,000 to potentially 10,000 pies utilized in the climactic pie fight. Initially, only a three-minute segment containing the pie fight was believed to have survived, as it had been incorporated into Robert Youngson's 1950s film documentaries.

However, the complete second reel, including the pie fight scene, was rediscovered in 2015 and subsequently released to the public on DVD and Blu-ray disc as part of the Laurel & Hardy: The Definitive Restorations compilation in 2020.

In recognition of its cultural significance, The Battle of the Century was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress in 2020 as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically signifi-

cant."

Although officially billed as a Laurel and Hardy film, the characters had yet to fully embody their iconic personas; they are not referred to as Stan and Ollie, with Laurel portraying Canvasback Clump and Hardy's manager character remaining unnamed.

Stan Laurel expressed his intention to inundate the film with so many pies that it would surpass any future pie-related cinema endeavors, saying "Let's give them so many pies that there never will be room for any more pie pictures in the whole history of the movies."

A young Lou Costello can be spotted among the prizefight crowd early in the film, adding to its historical significance. See above picture by Part Two.

For an extended period, only the climactic pie fight from The Battle of the Century was known to have survived. This changed in 1979 when Richard Feiner discovered the opening reel featuring the boxing match scene. However, certain segments, including Eugene Pallette's role as the insurance salesman in the park and the final gag involving a policeman receiving a pie in the face, remained missing.

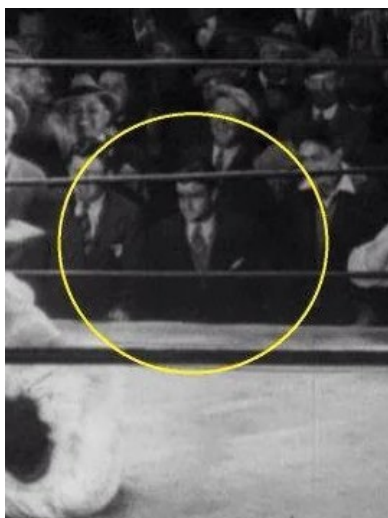
During the 1970s, Spanish television (station TVE1) aired what was believed to be the entire film, which included additional scenes such as a customer in a barber's chair receiving a pie in the face and a man purchasing two pies to join the pie fight.

In June 2015, at the Mostly Lost film workshop in Culpeper, Virginia, film collector Jon Mirsalis announced the rediscovery of the second reel of The Battle of the Century. This 16mm print, sourced from the original 35mm negative, was found in the film collection of Gordon Berkow, who had acquired it from Robert Youngson, a Laurel and Hardy film compilations writer and director. Youngson had received the reel as a preview print while working on his 1957 compilation The Golden Age of Comedy.

The restoration process was initiated by Lobster Films, with subsequent restoration efforts led by

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Jeff Joseph in collaboration with the UCLA Film and Television Archive. The film premiered officially at the Telluride Film Festival in September 2015, followed by a screening at the BFI London Film Festival in October 2015.

On April 8, 2017, the film was showcased at the Toronto Silent Film Festival with live accompaniment by Ben Model. Similarly, on May 29, 2017, it was presented at the Southend Film Festival accompanied by Adam Ramet. Additionally, it was screened at the Mostly Lost film workshop in June 2016, coinciding with the one-year anniversary of its rediscovery, with Mirsalis providing piano accompaniment.

### Cast

Stan Laurel as Canvasback Clump

Oliver Hardy as Manager

Noah Young as Thunderclap Callahan

Eugene Pallette as Insurance agent

Charlie Hall as Pie delivery man

Sam Lufkin as Boxing referee

Gene Morgan as Ring announcer

Steve Murphy as Callahan's second

George B. French as Dentist

Dick Sutherland as Dental patient

Anita Garvin as Woman who slips on pie

Dick Gilbert as Sewer worker

Wilson Benge as Pie victim with top hat

Jack O'Brien as Shoeshine patron

Ellinor Vanderveer as Lady in car

Lyle Tayo as Woman at window

Dorothy Coburn as Pie victim

Al Hallett as Pie victim

Lou Costello as Ringside spectator

Jack Hill as Ringside spectator

Ham Kinsey as Ringside spectator

Ed Brandenburg as Warring pedestrian

Bob O'Connor as Warring pedestrian

Bert Roach

Dorothea Wolbert

Charley Young



