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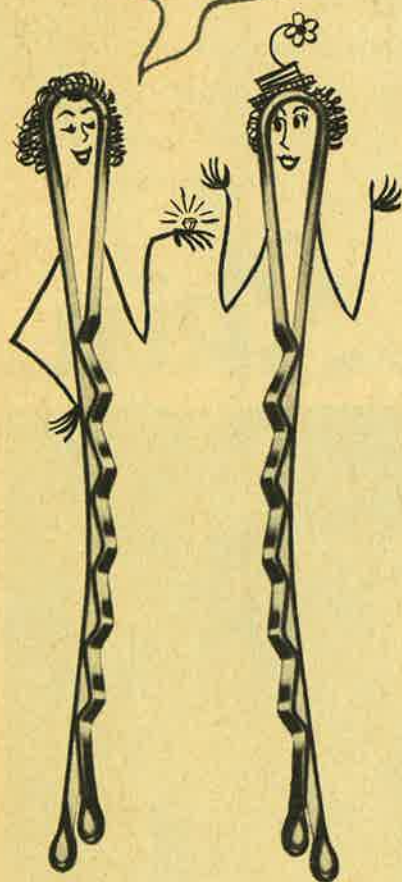
SPECIAL REPORT:

**THE STRANGE TWIST
IN THE LIVES
OF LIZ
AND DEBBIE**

20 PAGES OF SPECIAL FEATURES

plus **THE BEST MOVIES OF THE MONTH**

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APRIL, 1961

BEST
MOVIES
OF
THE
MONTH
IN STORY
FORM

FIRST-RUN FILMS

- 14 CRY FOR HAPPY
Starring Glenn Ford, Donald O'Connor, Miiko Taka, James Shigeta, Miyoshi Umeki
- 19 ROMANOFF AND JULIET
Starring Peter Ustinov, Sandra Dee, John Gavin, Akim Tamiroff
- 24 THE RIGHT APPROACH
Starring Frankie Vaughan, Martha Hyer, Juliet Prowse, Gary Crosby, David McLean
- 29 THE YOUNG SAVAGES
Starring Burt Lancaster, Dina Merrill, Shelley Winters, Edward Andrews
- 34 ALL IN A NIGHT'S WORK
Starring Dean Martin, Shirley MacLaine, Cliff Robertson, Charlie Ruggles

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GREAT
MOVIE
STARS

*where
are
they
now?*



1923



1958

THE GREAT STONE

● Near Christmas, 1955, Buster Keaton—who made the frozen face a world-famous comedy symbol—lay critically ill in Sawtelle Veterans Hospital in Los Angeles. Without warning, he'd suddenly been stricken with a severe gastrointestinal attack, internal hemorrhaging and a ruptured throat vein, at his modest Hollywood bungalow which his third wife, Eleanor Ruth Norriss, and he shared with his mother.

A corps of doctors worked around the clock without stopping, in a desperate attempt to save Keaton's life. He was given pint after pint of blood transfusions.

His tough constitution, conditioned on a lifetime in show business, began to prove its endurance. In a day or two, Buster showed a marked improvement. While he was still hospitalized, a representative of Paramount Pictures came to see him and offered him \$50,000 for his life story for a new movie. Buster accepted with cheerful promptness; and he was so pepped up by the offer that, four days later, he was out doing prat falls on a TV show.

One of the first things he did with the money he received was to use it to buy a comfortable ranch in Woodland Hills in the San Fernando Valley.

It was a turning point in Keaton's personal and professional life. For Buster ran the gamut in rising from obscurity to top fame as one of the silent film era's three greatest single comedians—Harold Lloyd and Charlie Chaplin were the other two—then tumbling back into obscurity and oblivion before bobbing up once more.

Today, at 65, Buster is a happy rancher on an attractive acre-and-a-half homesite in western San Fernando Valley, where he raises chickens, walnuts and fruit; he's the happy grandfather of six grandchildren, ranging in age from three to fourteen; for the past twenty years he's been happily married to his third wife Eleanor; and his professional career has been successful on stage and TV.

This winter, he's on a national stage tour, co-starring with Dodie Goodman in *Once Upon a Mattress*. This play, he is quick to emphasize, is not a bedroom farce, but the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale *The Princess and the Pea* converted into a charming musical comedy.

Last summer he flew to Munich, carrying with him all of the old negatives of his silent features and two-reel comedies, to have new prints made prior to a general European theatrical release. It was only this past year, after five years of negotiations, that Keaton—with the assistance of his old boss and long-time producer-friend Joseph Schenck—acquired all rights to his pictures. They include ten features and eighteen two-reelers—all made between 1919 and 1927.

Keaton told me, *When Comedy Was King* was such a hit in Europe, that it has revived the vogue for our old comedies all over again. "I'm informed that there is a market of 5000 theaters for my films in Europe. I have no plans for showing them theatrically in the United States at present. But I have a number of attractive offers to release them to TV whenever I choose.

"You know what this means?" he asked, his eyes twinkling. "I'm in hopes I can get enough from those

continued ➤

BUSTER KEATON



FACE IS

SMILING / 1961

continued

BUSTER KEATON

1925

The proud aunt of Buster's older son is the lovely Norma Talmadge, reigning queen of the silent era days.



1956

In N.Y., Buster and his wife Eleanor boarded a train for L.A., where his life story was to be filmed.



1960

After sixty-one years in show business, Buster is still going strong. This past winter, he's been on a national stage tour, starring with comedienne Dodie Goodman in "Once Upon a Mattress"—Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale converted into a charming musical comedy.



Screen Crossword Puzzle

by betty c. crisman

old releases so that I can retire, except for an occasional TV play or commercial as I choose.

"I can tell you that I'm ready. I think I've earned it. I've been working professionally since I was four (as a member of vaudeville's roughest knock-about act of the era—The Three Keatons).

"I can retire and it won't bother me at all. Some of these people have to keep going. They must always have an audience. Not me. I don't have to be in the public eye.

"There are lots of things I'd rather do. I like to putter around my own back yard, put in a truck garden, and take care of chickens. We put a pool out in back, and when it's real hot in the summer, I go in two or three times a day. Last year, I was in as early as March 17, and used the pool almost to the end of October.

"Did you know"—he cocked a finger at me—"that I'm damned near the dean of the theatrical profession today? I'm older professionally than Maurice Chevalier, Ed Wynn, George Jessel, Eddie Cantor, Charles Coburn, Francis X. Bushman and Bert Lahr."

Keaton's constant companion is Elmer—his 180-pound St. Bernard, who moves in and out of the house as he chooses. Sometimes, his cat, Jenny, also trots along.

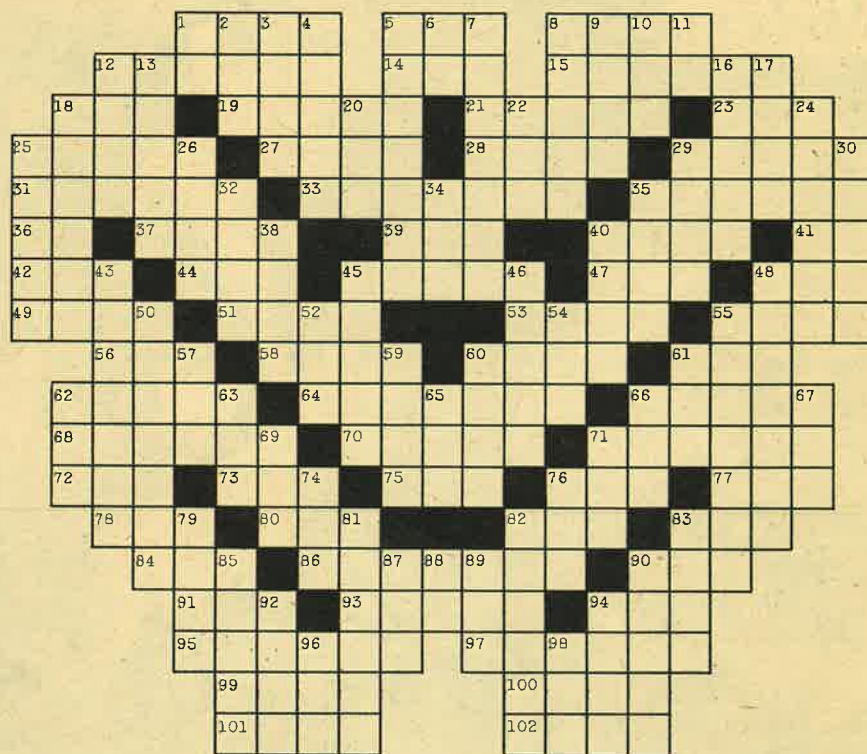
There are nine huge walnut trees on Keaton's place. From his ranch, each fall, he gathers a harvest which is stored in the garage for his own use throughout the winter. He's put in a variety of fruit trees including peach, crab apple, tangerine, dwarf lemon, orange, plum and apple.

His chicken house at the rear of his land behind the tack house—which was used by the former owner as a horse barn—is one of the unique features of his ranch. It's built like a miniature little red schoolhouse. There's even a bell tower on top. Inside, are twelve nests and two roosting perches for his setting hens.

A talking point with visitors is Buster's miniature O-gauge railroad—which runs 85 feet, from his garage to the swimming pool; its tiny cars carry hot dogs, soft drinks, popcorn and beer to delighted guests seated around the garden.

A bunkhouse in the former horse barn accommodates visiting grandchildren and friends.

Buster and (continued on page 74)



across

down

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| 1. Male co-star in <i>The Plunderers</i> | 55. Burglar | 1. Carhop in 46-D: init. | 50. Cooks over again |
| 5. Interpreter in <i>The Great Impostor</i> | 56. Turn right | 2. Oldie, <i>The B— Generation</i> | 52. Son in <i>Sunrise at Campobello</i> |
| 8. Mer—s McCambridge | 58. Terrible | 3. Steady | 54. Wreath |
| 12. Mend | 60. Oldie, C— | 4. Liberates | 55. End of a yard of a square sail |
| 14. TV's — <i>Hunt</i> | 61. — in a <i>Cocked Hat</i> | 5. Male co-star in <i>The Pleasure of His Company</i> | 57. Oldie, B—, <i>Book and Candle</i> |
| 15. Harangued | 62. Newspaper reporter in <i>It Happened One Night</i> | 6. Oldie, <i>The S— Devil</i> | 59. Son in <i>The Dark at the Top of the Stairs</i> |
| 18. Gary Co— | 64. Geisha in <i>Cry for Happy</i> | 7. Femme star of <i>Splendor in the Grass</i> | 60. Raymond M—y, in <i>The Great Impostor</i> |
| 19. Oldie, Re— <i>Hell!</i> | 66. Bride in <i>Cimarron</i> | 8. He plays Dan on TV's <i>Nanette Fabray Show</i> | 61. Wife in <i>Murder, Inc.</i> |
| 21. Character actor in <i>Jack the Giant Killer</i> | 68. Coral islands | 9. Stefan in <i>Surprise Package</i> | 62. Greer —son, in <i>Sunrise at Campobello</i> |
| 23. Daughter in <i>Romanoff and Juliet</i> | 70. Smallest | 10. Producer in <i>Pepe</i> | 63. Oldie, <i>Desire Under the —s</i> |
| 25. Girl friend in <i>All in a Night's Work</i> | 71. Period of the greatest strength | 11. Prostitute in <i>Butterfield 8</i> : init. | 65. <i>The Mouse that R—ed</i> |
| 27. Plateau | 72. Elliott—d, in <i>The Absent-Minded Professor</i> | 12. Paper measure | 66. Male star of <i>Blood and Roses</i> |
| 28. Lieutenant Colonel in <i>Tunes of Glory</i> | 73. Oldie, <i>The —dle of the Night</i> | 13. Conniver in <i>North to Alaska</i> | 67. Danny K— |
| 29. Maxim | 75. James Da—n, in <i>The Guns of Navarone</i> | 16. Confidante in <i>Butterfield 8</i> | 69. Sagamore in <i>The Millionaire</i> |
| 31. Socialite in <i>Sanctuary</i> | 76. Director of <i>The Time Machine</i> | 17. Ex-playboy in <i>All in a Night's Work</i> | 71. Oldie, A —ful of Rain |
| 33. Union member in <i>All in a Night's Work</i> | 77. Oldie, A T— of <i>Two Cities</i> | 18. Pay in advance | 74. He plays Wally in TV's <i>Leave It to Beaver</i> |
| 35. Miserly | 78. Sprite | 20. Oldie, C— <i>McCall</i> | 76. Oldie, —sion |
| 36. Oldie, — <i>Periscope</i> | 80. Cleaning tool | 22. Nat "King" C— | 79. Chief Petty Officer in <i>Cry for Happy</i> |
| 37. Great Lake | 82. One of James Mason's pets | 24. Christmas beverage | 81. Oldie, —s of the Sky |
| 39. French king | 83. Jane With—, in 46-D | 25. Smash | 82. American of French or Spanish descent |
| 40. British oldie, <i>The Red —s</i> | 84. Domestic animal | 26. Light tan | 83. Oldie, C— <i>Fire</i> |
| 41. Yoki Ta—, in <i>The Savage Innocents</i> | 86. Mother in <i>The Young Savages</i> | 29. Oldie, <i>The —ic Man</i> | 85. Cyrus in <i>13 Ghosts</i> |
| 42. Polish youth in <i>Ezra's</i> | 90. Femme co-star in <i>King of Kings</i> | 30. Scanning | 87. Bow |
| 44. William Holden oldie, <i>The T—ing Point</i> | 91. South Korean soldier | 32. Male co-star in <i>The Day of the Gun</i> | 88. Character actress in <i>The Misfits</i> : init. |
| 45. The General in <i>Romanoff and Juliet</i> | 93. Villian of TV and movies | 34. Lillian —h | 89. John K—, in <i>The Crowded Sky</i> |
| 47. Unfaithful wife in <i>Strangers When We Meet</i> | 94. Distress signal | 35. <i>The Wackiest — in the Army</i> | 90. Merchandise |
| 48. The Spy in <i>Romanoff and Juliet</i> | 95. Photographer's Mate First Class in <i>Cry for Happy</i> | 38. She plays Violet in TV's <i>Bringing Up Buddy</i> | 92. Weave |
| 49. Magazine reporter in 46-D | 97. Shapeley in <i>It Happened one Night</i> | 40. Slip | 94. Strikebreaker |
| 51. Bird of prey | 99. Wife in <i>The Young Savages</i> | 43. Heir | 96. Lu— Patten, in <i>Go Naked in the World</i> |
| 53. Ph— Ober, in | 100. Burden | 45. Oldie, A —ous Journey | 98. Oldie, — —ig |
| | 101. Main attraction | 46. <i>The — Approach</i> | |
| | 102. Recedes | 48. Contradictions | |

SOLUTION ON PAGE 70

Buster Keaton

continued from page 59

his attractive younger wife have no servants. They do all their own housework. But Keaton keeps a man on the place while they are traveling, to oversee it. They have an automatic lawn mower with a seat, and it's Buster's proud boast that, "Eleanor can mow the whole place in an hour."

Keaton is the Mayor of Woodland Hills—the small suburb, with a country-like atmosphere, in which they live. Although subdivisions and housing tracts are beginning to cut up the broad fields of sweet corn and groves of live oaks and walnuts, there's still a lot of open country. As Mayor, Buster officiates in the customary Mayor's duties—such as assisting the Governor in snipping the ribbon to open a new stretch of freeway

through the town, and tossing the first ball at the opening of the Little League season. His sons Joseph (Jimmy) and Robert—

Answers to Screen Picture Quiz (Quiz on page 51)

- A: "Bells Are Ringing"
- B: "The Rose Tattoo"
- C: "A Crack in the Mirror"
- D: "A Hole in the Head"
- E: "Dial M for Murder"
- F: "Ocean's Eleven"
- G: "Sleeping Beauty"
- H: "The Five Pennies"
- I: "The Razor's Edge"
- J: "The Horse's Mouth"
- K: "A Hatful of Rain"
- L: "Duel in the Sun"

by his first marriage to Natalie Talmadge—are now 36 and 34, respectively. Jim is in charge of the publicity still department at 20th Century-Fox. Robert has a dude ranch outside Reno. Both they and their families are on excellent personal terms with Buster and his wife, and pay frequent visits with their children. As the only living heirs of their aunts, Norma and Constance Talmadge—who were reigning queens of the silent era—the boys stand to inherit sizable fortunes.

Keaton married Natalie Talmadge on May 31, 1921, in New York. They were in the top tier of Hollywood society in a gaudy era, and when they split up, it was headline news everywhere. Their divorce became final on August 11, 1933, and she won custody of their two young sons. Later, they legally changed their surnames to Talmadge.

During the previous year of his estrangement from Natalie, Buster had met and become attached to a pretty brunette nurse

named Mae Scrivens, who cared for him during an illness in El Paso. They were married in Ensenada, Mexico, on January 8, 1933; but because it was before his decree from Natalie was final, they remarried in Ventura, California, on October 22, 1933.

It was a short-lived marriage of only a year and a half. "Hardly any marriage at all," Keaton says today.

Buster's most successful marriage has been his third and last—to dancer Eleanor Ruth Norriss on May 30, 1940. He met her when she was dancing in *Rosalie* at MGM, where he was doing some gag writing. He was 44; she was only 21.

Keaton told me, "On hearing of our plans, a couple of my middle-aged friends advised Eleanor against marrying a man more than twice her age. They said no good could come of it. But their concern was for me, not her."

Today, Keaton likes to reminisce about his colorful 61 years in show business, from the time Roscoe (Fatty) Arbuckle got him into movies and taught him how to throw a custard pie, right up to his current road trip—of which he says: "I could do this show five times a day if need be."

It was a freewheeling era in those early silent days—when he earned \$3500 a week, owned his own studio, built a \$300,000 house in Beverly Hills across the street from Tom Mix, and used to throw week-end poker parties where a man would win or lose \$50,000 in an evening, and never worry.

Buster got his name from famed magician Harry Houdini, who was originally a partner of Buster's troupier parents, Joe and Myra Keaton, in a tent show which toured the Midwest tank towns. One day, Houdini saw the tot take a header down a staircase, and emerge bruised but alive. Houdini exclaimed, "What a buster!" The name stuck.

Buster was born on October 4, 1895, during his parents' one-night stand in Piqua, Kansas; four years later, he became a member of the act. In 1916, the family act broke up after Buster's father had a quarrel with the producer Martin Beck, and then chased Beck out of his own theater—Broadway's famed two-a-day vaudeville house, the Palace.

Soon afterwards, Keaton's parents moved to Muskegon, Michigan; Buster headed for Hollywood and the old Norma Talmadge studio, where Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle—

who'd seen Buster in vaudeville—employed him as a stooge. In 1918, Buster joined the U.S. Army and served in France with the AEF in the 40th Infantry Division. After being discharged in May, 1919, he rejoined Arbuckle; and six months later, he made his own first starring two-reel comedy in partnership with Joseph M. Schenck. After several two-reelers, in 1921 Buster made his first feature, *The Boat*.

Buster's heyday as one of the great stars of the silent era came to an abrupt end with the advent of sound in the late 1920's. He made several sound films, but they never had anything like the success of his original silent features such as *The Navigator*; *The General*; *Steamboat Bill, Jr.*; *Go West*; *Sherlock, Jr.*; and *College*.

With the talkies, Keaton's star began to fade away. He had his hands full with troubles over contracts, alimony and income taxes. In 1934, he fled for bankruptcy.

After several abortive attempts—in Hollywood, London, Paris and Mexico—to make sound features which would recapture his original fame, in 1936 Buster joined the MGM writing staff to work up comedy routines for other performers. He is responsible for some of the funniest routines in numerous Red Skelton pictures and in *An American in Paris*.

During the 40's Buster played occasional stage engagements, including leads in summer stock and touring companies of *The Gorilla* and *Three Men on a Horse*. During 1946, he was a star with the Circus Medrano in Paris.

He did his first TV in 1948, and was one of the first Hollywoodites to have his own series. In the early 50's, he made guest appearances on such shows as Ed Sullivan and Garry Moore. But he was not faring too well when the throat hemorrhage, which almost cost him his life, hit him in 1955.

Since then, things have been going mighty well for Keaton. And with his home paid for and money anticipated from his old silents, he estimates that he can live comfortably on \$7,000 a year.

No wonder the great frozen face is no more; it's a broad smiling one instead. After a turbulent, exciting life, Keaton has it made.

THE END

(This story began on page 56)



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