

CLUB & SPORTS

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for
Men & Women
Century City
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By Eileen O'Neill

QUESTION: What do you get when you cross a multi-faceted production expert with a very feminine and talented designer?

ANSWER: One "special effects genius," one "beauty queen with brains" and, as a bonus, a Doctor for a son-in-law!

All five are active, contributing family members who convene a minimum of three times a week at the chic Century West Club in Century City.

As the begatter of our "play together, stay together" family, Byron Roberts, who sports a perpetual twinkle in his eyes and an affable personality, has also found time to participate in the making of over 250 motion pictures. "Gone With The Wind" credits him as an assistant director while "Baby Face Nelson" boasts of his producing talents. "My Wild Irish Rose," "The Wizards of Oz," "Logan's Run," and currently "Baltimore Bullet" and "Rocky and Oliver" exemplify him as one of the most proficient and sought after production managers in the business. During the early days of his career, after graduating St. John's Law School, Byron by-lined "Dining the World" in New York and "Radio Fan" for the Los Angeles Examiner. The Ritz Brothers owe at least a portion of their fame to his press agentic skill. 'Long about six o'clock on any given evening Byron can be spotted "handholding" with his "other half" en route to their workouts at the Century West Club. Mrs. Roberts, a vivacious bundle of contagious effervescence, also radiates the sweet smell of success as her very feminine designs have graced the covers of Photoplay and Modern



CENTURY WEST CLUB—visits the "family that stays together because they play together." Byron and Taffy Roberts with their daughter Janie and son Richard.

Screen, have sold in such prestigious stores as Neiman-Marcus and Bergdorf's and have enhanced the glamour of glamour stars like Lana Turner and Hedy Lamarr. Her retail "Taffy" stores which started as a single entity in Westwood blossomed into sixteen "in" boutiques throughout the Southland. Taffy, whose real name is Sarah, was born out of Taffel, her maiden name which she promptly changed eight months after her sister introduced her to Byron during a visit to Los Angeles from Atlanta. Recently, their daughter Janie traded her maiden name for that of a young and handsome anesthesiologist, Dr. Alan Cohn who administers at Cedars, St. John's, St. Joseph's in Burbank and Daniel Freeman hospitals. CWC: Dr. Cohn, how did you meet your bride?

DR. COHN: After attending medical school at NYU, I came to Los Angeles in 1971 to serve my residency at U.C.L.A. Janie's

"beauty and brains" combination made their impression. If I may do a little bragging, she was on the Dean's List.

JANIE: That came about as a result of an incentive program. My father said if I did well in my studies, he'd buy me a Mercedes. So, I applied myself and made the "list."

CWC: Since you've won a number of beauty contests and have appeared in television commercials, should we conclude that you're headed for a theatrical career?

JANIE: No. I've also been a nurse, a buyer, a paralegal, and now I'm opening my own all-European cosmetic store "Le Parfumerie."

CWC: Meantime, while love was blossoming for Janie and Alan, twenty-nine year old Richard, the Roberts' special effects genius who dazzled the world by swinging through trees as Tarzan's "Boy," completed a script about the trials and jubinations of growing up in the posh playland of Beverly Hills in
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CENTURY WEST—CONT'D

the sixties. His special effects mastery unveiled itself in his much awarded "Theta" film, a seven minute time capsule history of the Universe shown through the eyes of an analogue computer. Richard's animated movie trailers augmented "Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice," "Cactus Flower," "Love Machine," "Mame," and "Butterflies Are Free," but it was his revolutionary work on "Logan's Run" that prompted "Sixty Minutes" to highlight his abilities.

RICHARD: Bill Abbott who headed the special effects unit on the picture had been trying to solve a particular problem that involved an electronic crystal force field, 300 extras and a carousel that cost \$600,000. They couldn't make the force field look like anything more than colored lights. Finally, in frustration, they gave me an opportunity to try and solve it, and it resulted in the first time computerized optical effects were used in a Todd-AO 70 mm film. "Logan's Run" won the Academy Award for Visual Effects in 1976.

CWC: While Richard is forming his own Computer Animation Company incorporating his radical new techniques, his multi-talented father continues to excel in the area he enjoys most—the dollars and cents of the motion picture business.

CWC: Byron, what are your duties as a production manager?

BYRON: After a producer has acquired a script, he gives it to me for a script break down which entails a complicated system of organizing the number of shooting days, the actors and locations, etc. onto a production board. I then figure film and lab expenses, stunts, special effects, hotels, food, equipment, wardrobe, insurance, staff, crew and many other components. I compute this figure by reading the script and knowing what has to be done for each sequence. After I arrive at a total, the producer uses this information to acquire financing for the picture.

CWC: What do you as a financial expert feel about the salaries that are paid actors like Marlon Brando?

BYRON: All over the world with



AT THE HELM—of Popeyes in Mission Hills, Bob Eckstrom and "Big" Jim Smith. Popeyes is the Valley's newest dining and dancing place! Does Popeyes serve spinach? Yes—a luscious Popeyes' Spinach Salad accompanies every dinner.

the exception of the United States you sell your movie in advance with a guarantee. You sell France for a certain amount of money, England for a certain amount, Germany, & so forth. For example, theatre owners booked "A Bridge Too Far" before it came out on the basis of its many known actors. Consequently, the money was guaranteed even though the movie was poorly received and got bad reviews.

CWC: How much money must a movie earn before it shows a profit?

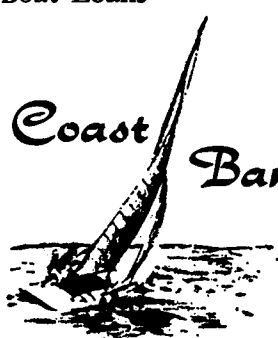
BYRON: Four or five times negative cost. After the picture comes out, the releasing organiza-

tion takes their cut and the theatre owner must allow for advertising, so it takes a long time before the producer sees a profit.

CWC: During the interview the obvious warmth between Byron and Taffy begged the question—How do you account for the success of your marriage?

TAFFY: Byron and I share everything with each other. Before he takes on a new production, we read the script and discuss its merits. Then, if he has to go on location, we go together. I guess that's why all our friends are divorced and we're still married. Also, I think being feminine has a lot to do with it. A woman can do anything she wants in life if she plays the part of a woman. That applies to business too. Once, before the Union Bank was built in Beverly Hills, there were four empty spaces owned by the man who then had the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. He would not even think about renting those spaces for retail. After much ado, I finally managed to meet with him. He was handsome and had grey hair. "What kind of business do you have?" "A dress shop," I replied. "I'm not interested," he said firmly. "You will be interested. I've got something that's very different." "What could you have in a dress shop that would be very different?" "I have a 'very feminine' dress shop." I said that in my real Southern accent. Anyway, he said he thought he had heard everything, then he leased me the space. Jax and Matthews came in after me. Another time, after I signed one of the biggest leases in my life for \$350,000 through Cald-

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EDDIE WOODALL—(left) is pictured with his long time friends Mr. and Mrs. Richard Ralphs at the Los Angeles Tennis Club during one of the recent parties held there.

CENTURY WEST—CONT'D

well Banker, they asked me how much money I had in the bank. I said, "About \$350." The executor replied, "\$350. I'm sick!" I smiled and in a very feminine tone announced, "You won't be sorry. I'm going to have the best shop on the street." Caldwell Banker said that story has been repeated a million times. In fact, they just called me to open another Taffy shop in the Bonaventure. We still maintain one in the Ambassador Hotel which our son Richard operates.

CWC: Could you summarize the "family that plays together, stays together" philosophy?

TAFFY: Byron and I begin each day by walking three miles before breakfast. Then in the evenings we go to the Century West Club.

BYRON: Where I play racquetball. I'm an absolute racquetball fiend.

JANIE: I play racquetball as well as participating in the classes.

ALAN: I exercise religiously.

TAFFY: I attend the stretch classes. They're hard, but worthwhile. Afterwards, I enjoy a massage.

RICHARD: I can be found in the co-ed classes and I've developed an interest in skiing through members I have met. The Century West Club is the crossroads of many types of people. It affords creative discussions in an informal atmosphere. The club is a great equalizer.

TAFFY: Since we come to the club at the same time, it gives us something in common which is one of the many reasons we are so close as a family.



MR. AND MRS. STANLEY DAVIS—flank General Omar Bradley at a party before General Bradley's departure for Fort Bliss, Texas where he now resides. They are close friends and the General enjoys reading Stanley's monthly column in CLUB & Sports "The Cellar Club." Stanley is President of that fun organization.

DOIN' THE TOWN—CONT'D

For \$7.50, including salad, the bouillabaisse along with the \$6.95 prime rib dinner are the two **Friday** evening favorites with the actors and sportsmen who make their meeting place the **Saratoga**.

"At the **Saratoga** we make a point of serving authentic cuisine, whatever its origin," states **Higer**.

A diner at **La Polonoise** told co-owner **Chef Jean Rouard** that he had a most delicious crepe souffle in **Paris** not long ago, and asked if he could prepare one for him. **Jean** obliged with his **Crepe Souffle Cabaret** which he prepared with cream pastry, white beaten egg, lady fingers soaked in Kirschwasser, and flambe at the table. Result? You guessed it! The diner was so pleased he toasted Jean and his pretty co-owner sister, **France**, with a bottle of **Dom Perignon Champagne**.

To set the record straight, the **Luau** property in **Beverly Hills** has been sold. But, **Steve Crane**, owner of the **Luau**, did not sell the restaurant per se. In addition to the property, he was paid a huge amount for his lease and given two

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