

At Home with the Movies

ELLERY QUEEN
Sunday, Sept. 7

Not really a movie, even a made-for-television movie, but there's the promise of entertainment in this murder mystery based on the pulps' most notable sleuth. Jim Hutton stars in the title role, with David Wayne as his inspector father. Both of them are out to discover the identity of the murderer of a beautiful (but slightly strange) fashion model — and it looks like any member of a particular family could be the culprit.

WHITE LIGHTNING [1973]
Monday, Sept. 8



Pat Costa

As the premiere episode of "Beacon Hill" opened and the parade of characters began I had at least one question answered. And that is what happens to soap opera heroines when they meet their demises on the sudsers. The answer: They wind up on prime time soap opera.

For that is what "Beacon Hill" is. But soap opera as we have seldom seen. Elegance in both ornate furnishings and stylish clothes (1920s), vies with top notch actors and literate script for the viewer's attention. And in this particular battle the audience can only be the winner.

But back to the soap opera gals. Susan Blanchard who played the goody-goody Mary on "All My Children" popped up as Maureen, a green maid recently emigrated from Ireland. Maudie one of the dumb daughters of the house is the lovely Maeve McGuire who died in a boat explosion a year or so ago on "Edge of Night."

Nancy Merchand I believe is also an alumnus of the afternoon serials as are several other of the actors, although their periods of occupation must have occurred sometime before I became addicted to the daytime shows.

The opulence is what hits the viewer initially in this story of a great house in Boston where a newly rich Irish family and their servants mingle and mesh in an extravaganza of plots and subplots.

Frankly, I loved it. At the end of

Surprise Festivities Honor Hornell Couple

Hornell — More than 400 people recently showed up at the Knights of Columbus Hall at a reception honoring the prominent local couple Jim and Ricky Dagon. The event was a surprise lunch, Mass, and reception organized by the couple's seven children — a surprise that had been more than a year in the making.

Father Benedict Riccardo, who had officiated at the couple's wedding 25 years ago, was also present at the festivities. Dagon is the owner and operator of the Dagon Funeral Home, a business which has been in his family for four generations.

The day's events started when the couple went to their customary daily lunch at the Big Elms Restaurant unaware that they would be greeted by their entire family and Father Ric-

Burly Burt Reynolds goes the "good old boy" route here as Arkansas moonshiner paroled from prison in order to get the goods on a county sheriff who is heavily on the take — and who also murdered Reynolds' kid brother. The roots of the film border on an exploitation of the notorious civil-rights murders in Neshoba County, Mississippi, a few years back.

CAHILL, U.S. MARSHAL
[1973]
Thursday, Sept. 11

John Wayne's production is another of Wayne's "message"

the two-hour premiere episode I was sorry it was over, a feeling one seldom if ever experiences watching television.

And since WHEC-TV refuses to show it in the network time of 10 p.m. Tuesdays (it will be screened for delayed showing here at 11:30 p.m. Sundays) I plan to put up an antenna or subscribe to cable TV, which ever we can have installed first.

A note of caution: The show is not for youngsters. A house of prostitution figured prominently in the premiere's main plot about the son of the house, a World War I amputee whose self-pity leads him astray — temporarily I presume. And there promises to be a great deal more in the way of illicit bedding down in this series. For those concerned about the overall tenor of the story, let them rest assured there is an overriding morality in the house, the guidelines demarcated and preserved by those who actually run the domain, both upstairs and down.

To give you an idea to the lengths to which the set designers and stage managers have gone one need only have looked to the great mansion's kitchen the night of a party marking the advent of prohibition.

As the camera lingered lovingly over the handiwork of the pastry chef — petit fours in pastel frosting, rosettes, then to the plates of lobster and finally to crystal finger bowls, a tiny shard of lemon afloat in each, it became increasingly evident that no expense has been spared in the production.

Happily, the cast headed by Miss Marchand, Beatrice Straight, Stephen Elliott and George Rose is more than equal to every inanimate enhancement. The writers have managed a welter of intrigue to keep its audience spellbound, developing characters with strokes both broad and delineated.

The prediction here: "Beacon Hill" will not only rise to sure fire popularity, it is bound to spawn many an imitator.

Westerns in the tradition of True Grit and The Cowboys. The glaring contrivances of the plot would be acceptable in a less pretentious film. Wayne spins out a peculiar brand of morality which seems, once again, to condone the use of guns in the hands of the young. More questionable, however, is the film's resolution. Transparent rationalizations will hardly mislead an adult, but one can only wonder about the effect upon youngsters.

A-III

DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER
[1971]
Friday, Sept. 12

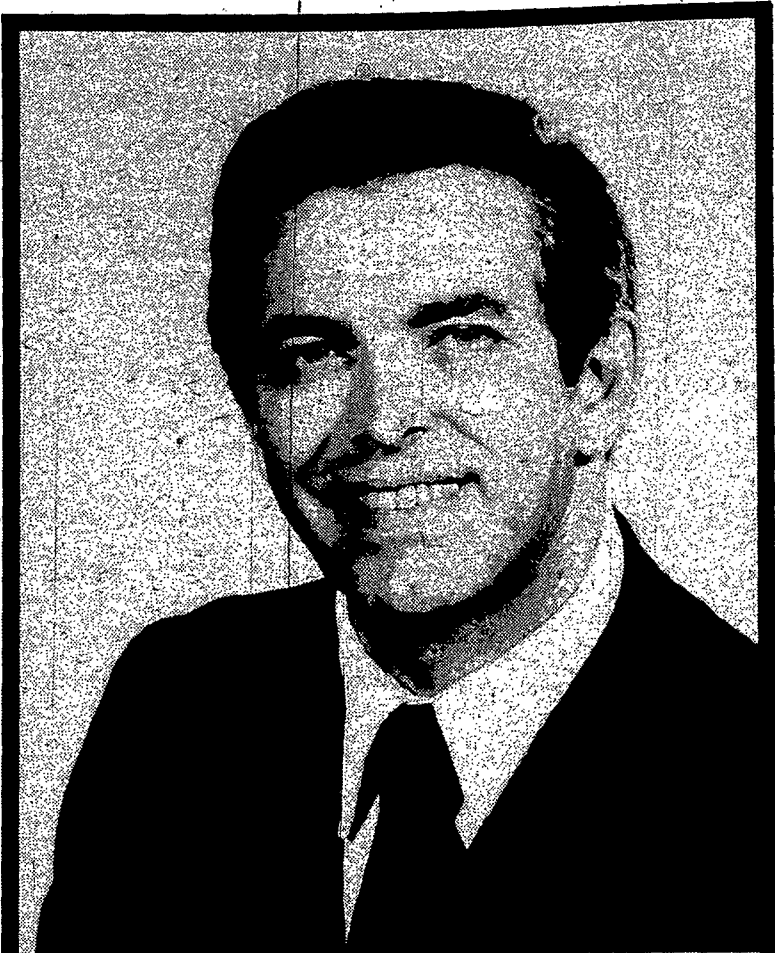
Perhaps it is simply another indication of our common mortality, but Sean Connery's return to the role of the legendary 007 this time out evokes only a nostalgia for his earlier, much more entertaining films in the series. Discriminating Connery-Bond cultists will realize it is not merely a case of tired repetition; rather it would seem that everyone connected with this film was too tired and bored with it all to come up with the wit and wizardry that created and fostered the myth itself.

A-III

THE LAST OF SHEILA
[1973]
Saturday, Sept. 13

Is one of those super-slick entertainments whose surface seductiveness is almost enough to distract you from its basic lack of substance and wit. Sheila is a "game" movie, about the ploys and deceptions supposedly decadent and desperate people use in order to stay afloat in Hollywood's presumably murderous undertow. Film producer James Coburn assembles his "friends" — writer Richard Benjamin and rich wife Joan Hackett, agent Dyan Cannon, has-been director James Mason, sex symbol Raquel Welch and manager-hubby Jan McShane — for a week's heady entertainment aboard his sumptuous yacht in the Mediterranean — the occasion being the first anniversary of the hit-and-run killing of Coburn's wife, whose name graces both the yacht and the movie's title.

A-III



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