

You've got **MORE MAIL**

■ I would love to see a feature on Sheldon Leonard, a great supporting actor from the Forties and Fifties. I once met him in a bar in Hampstead and that characteristic voice was exactly as I remembered it from the movies.

Jean Mundell

Retro says: Native New Yorker Leonard's distinctive accent made him Hollywood's top choice for gangsters and streetwise heavies.

His most memorable roles include *Harry the Horse* in *Guys and Dolls* (1955) and *Nick the bartender* in *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946). Tired of the tough guy typecasting, Leonard made the move behind the camera and successfully produced dozens of TV shows including *The Andy Griffith* and *Dick Van Dyke Shows*. One of his last acting jobs was a guest slot on sitcom *Cheers* in 1990. He died in 1997 aged 89.



REEL LOCATION

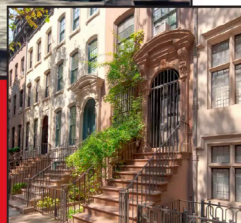


■ Can you tell me if Holly Golightly's apartment in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* is a real place in New York or was it constructed in the studio?

Francis Driver

Retro says: Blake Edwards and the cast and crew of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* had

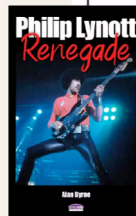
just eight days to shoot in Manhattan, to capture Central Park, the steps of the New York library, the women's prison on 10th Street and crucially Tiffany's store itself. The brownstone house that stood in as the exterior of Holly and Paul's apartment building can be found at 169 East 71st Street, Manhattan. However, the interior scenes and virtually everything else, including the rain-soaked rescue of Cat, was shot on the Paramount backlot in LA.



OUT NOW...

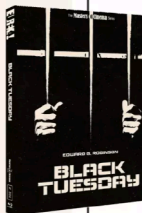
BUY THE BOOK

From the early days on the Dublin music scene through the heady success of *Thin Lizzy*, *Philip Lynott: Renegade* by Alan Byrne reveals the ebb and flow of the star's tragically short life through the eyes of the people who were by his side through it all. **RRP £18.99**



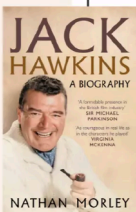
WATCH ON BLU-RAY

Edward G Robinson is at his most terrifying as violent mobster Vincent Canelli in *Black Tuesday* (1954). After hatching a plan to escape death row with the help of his moll Hatti (Jean Parker) and fellow inmate Peter (Peter Graves) he embarks on a psychopathic murder spree. **RRP £18.99**



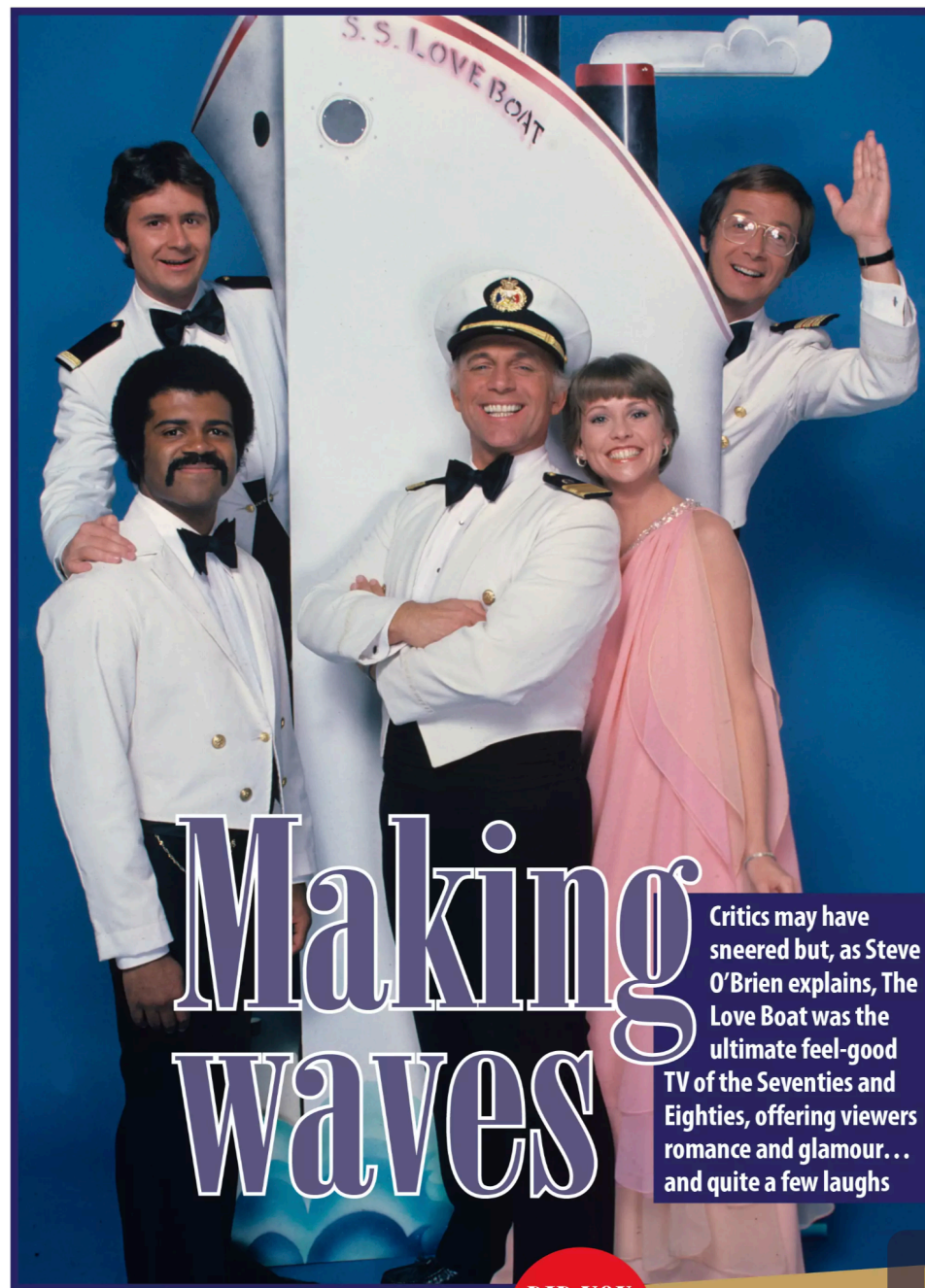
BUY THE BOOK

Extensively researched through exclusive interviews with friends and colleagues, *Jack Hawkins* by Nathan Morley is the definitive biography of one of the most iconic stars of UK cinema who became an enduring symbol of British pluck and determination. **RRP £30**



WATCH ON TV

Looking for a traditional festive TV treat? Talking Pictures TV are showing 1986 ITV panto *Cinderella: The Shoe Must Gone On*. Female impersonator Danny La Rue takes the lead as Cinderella's wicked stepmother, accompanied by an all-star cast including Roy Kinnear, Cheryl Baker, Jimmy Cricket, Brian Conley, Roy Hudd, Mike Reid, Les Dennis, Roy Walker and Judith Chalmers. **Boxing Day 6.15pm on Talking Pictures TV**



Making waves

Critics may have sneered but, as Steve O'Brien explains, *The Love Boat* was the ultimate feel-good TV of the Seventies and Eighties, offering viewers romance and glamour... and quite a few laughs ➤

DID YOU KNOW?

The Love Boat's theme was composed by Charles Fox (*Killing Me Softly with His Song*) with lyrics by award-winning wordsmith Paul Williams.

Aaron Spelling knew a thing about giving audiences what they most desired. In the Seventies and Eighties, TV viewers were aware the moment they saw the producer's name on screen what kind of world they were about to be immersed in. From Fantasy Island (1977-84) through to Hart to Hart (1979-84) and Dynasty (1981-89), his shows whisked audiences away from their dreary realities to a world of gloss, glitz and glamour, and there was no more escapist and aspirational series on his illustrious CV than The Love Boat.

The show, which first aired in 1977, was never a critics' favourite. It was never talked up in the press or showered with awards. But it was one of those series that was beloved by audiences, winning the network that aired it, ABC, ratings that were the envy of rival broadcasters.

Its premise was charmingly simple. Each episode, a raft of new passengers would board the luxury cruise ship, MS Pacific Princess, and every week a handful of guests, who were always single and travelling alone, would find love. Its promise

of romantic exploits was even there in the winningly catchy theme song, sung by Jack Jones, 'The love boat promises something for everyone/ Set a course for adventure/ Your mind on a new romance/ Love won't hurt anymore/ It's an open smile on a friendly shore.'

A SHOW FOR THE AGES

With a big-screen rom-com, it's only over a story of its central two characters, who are, generally speaking, young or, at the very least, in early middle age. The beauty of The Love Boat, however, is that it embraced love stories from across the age spectrum. So, while it showcased good-looking 20-somethings falling head over heels, it also depicted older people, some widowed, some still looking for Mr or Mrs Right after a lifetime of searching, being swept off their feet.

Audiences' first experience of this ultimate, multi-generational rom-com was in 1976, when ABC aired what it thought at the time was a one-off TV movie. A ratings success, a sequel, The Love Boat II (1977), was swiftly commissioned. A third film, The New Love Boat

(1977), followed, before a full series was given the green-light.

The Love Boat series began on 24 September 1977, with its first episode setting the scene for the next nine seasons, with three different plotlines in each instalment (with one story having a more serious tone than the others) and a guest cast of well-known actors. The Love Boat made full use of the Golden Age of Hollywood stars that were, by the Seventies and Eighties, still very much with us. Names such as Gene Kelly, Ginger Rogers, Lillian Gish, Joan Fontaine, Eva Marie Saint, Ethel Merman, Mickey Rooney, Debbie Reynolds and Douglas Fairbanks Jr all graced the deck at various points, while many of today's biggest stars, from Jamie Lee Curtis to Tom Hanks, Martin Short and Tim Robbins began their careers on The Love Boat.

The cast was headed by Gavin MacLeod as Captain Merrill Stubing, Bernie Kopell as ship's doctor Adam Bricker, Fred Grandy as purser Burl 'Gopher' Smith, Lauren Tewes as cruise director Julie McCoy and Ted Lange as the sympathetic bartender, Isaac Washington.



The crew: Lauren Tewes, Fred Grandy, Gavin MacLeod, Ted Lange and Bernie Kopell appeared together in virtually every one of the show's 250 episodes

ABC aired the first of five Love Boat specials, including a two-part Christmas story, The Christmas Cruise. The final TV movie, A Valentine Voyage, was broadcast on 12 February 1990.

THE LEGEND LIVES ON

But yet again, it wasn't to be the full stop on the Love Boat brand. In 1998, the UPN network debuted Love Boat: The Next Wave, a revival that headlined Vegas star Robert Urich as Jim Kennedy III, the captain of a new cruise ship, the Sun Princess. The series maintained the same format as the old show, and even found time, in the opening episode of season two, to welcome back various characters from the original.

Sadly, Love Boat: The Next Wave's televisual voyage stopped well short of the original's nine-season run, and was axed after just 25 episodes. But then in 2022, proving that the show's name still has power, even in the 21st century, CBS launched The Real Love Boat, a reality dating competition featuring single contestants on a luxury cruise, with actors Rebecca Romijn and Jerry O'Connell as hosts.

But it's that original series that people remember most fondly. Aaron Spelling would go on to produce many more iconic and successful series in his career, but it's The Love Boat that perhaps encapsulates his brand best, as a series that brought a little bit of fantasy and romance into the lives of its viewers.

One of the reasons for the show's success is that it was absolutely in tune with the times. In the Seventies, cruises were growing in popularity, with thousands of holidaymakers choosing to spend two weeks aboard a luxury liner, and stopping in a variety of locations instead of being stuck for a fortnight in just one place. And it was a non-fiction book that rode the

wave of cruise-mania that helped kickstart the series. The Love Boats, by real-life cruise director Jeraldine Saunders, was a sensation when it was published in 1974, and the author would later claim her book, and the resulting TV series, fuelled an even greater expansion of the cruise ship industry. The show was even described by travel writer Kristoffer A Garin as 'the greatest product placement' ever, serving as a tantalising introduction to cruising for many of its holiday-hungry viewers.

The Love Boat screened for nine seasons between 1977 and 1986, clocking up a total of 245 episodes. But towards the end of its run, ratings had begun to slide and the series broadcast its final regular instalment on 24 May 1986. But that wasn't quite the end for the travels of the Pacific Princess – on 21 November 1986,



The show was filmed aboard two actual Princess cruise line ships, the Pacific Princess and her sister ship, the Island Princess



Debbie Reynolds hopped aboard Captain Stubing's (Gavin MacLeod) Pacific Princess five times

The Love Boat attracted big-name guest stars including Ginger Rogers and Douglas Fairbanks Jr

DID YOU KNOW?

Most of the cast of The Poseidon Adventure guest starred on the Love Boat. Stella Stevens, Roddy McDowall, Ernest Borgnine, Shelley Winters, Red Buttons, Carol Lynley, Pamela Sue Martin, Leslie Nielsen and Bob Hastings have all appeared on the series.