2020 THE YEAR IN SUMMARY
By Lou Armagno

Aloha “Charlie Chan fans,” and welcome to our 3rd annual newsletter. With it we highlight significant events and happenings at year’s end, then include other items of interest surrounding one of America’s first and most unique detectives: Charlie Chan of the Honolulu Police. 2020 was a difficult year for everyone, with cancelled lectures, mystery events and an array of setbacks for us all. Still, the year contained some interesting accolades for Detective Chan. First and foremost, at The Charlie Chan Family Home, heads bowed serenely as Mr. Rush Glick celebrated 20 years of his wonderful site, which kicked off April 23rd, 2000—CONGRATULATIONS RUSH! And again, in 2020, we find the famed Otto Penzler paid homage to our detective in his review of The Greatest Crime Films of All-Time for the site CrimeReads.com. His weekly review began December 2018, with Otto counting down the top 106 films to reach No. 1, August 2020. Check out his pick for No. 100 of the Greatest Crime Films of all-time! (Hint: It co-stars Boris Karloff!) Also in 2020, The Mysterious Bookshop (the oldest mystery specialist bookstore in America) has produced an exclusive card collection, Mysterious Classic Cards: 1828-1950. In the style of collectible baseball cards, they are devoted to covers and dust jackets of the greatest works of mystery and detective fiction. The 62 card set features Extraordinary cover art, with a description on the reverse side placing it in

IN THIS ISSUE:

Page 1: 2020 The Year in Summary.

Page 3: Actress Frances Chan in her role as daughter…Frances Chan (Webmaster Rush Glick).

Page 5: Collecting Mystery Fiction by Otto Penzler (Lou Armagno).

Page 7: Follow in Charlie Chan’s footsteps in Behind That Curtain (1928) through today’s San Francisco Chinatown (Brenda McNeal).

Page 15: 2021 A New Year and Beyond. (Lou Armagno).

KEEPER OF THE KEYS (recurring items)

Page 17. The Charlie Chan DVD “Featurettes” and where to find them.
historical context. Card no. 20 will interest Charlie Chan fans! And we’re happy to report our blog, The Postman on Holiday is going strong! Starting with our first monthly blog, January 2019, we are now entering our third year, with more than 4500 visitors from over 40 countries stopping by. “Thank you so much” for your support! Our “regulars” gathered each Monday evening to view Charlie Chan movies in the “Chat room” starting January 6th, 2020 with Behind that Curtain (1929) starring E. L. Park in a brief appearance as Charlie Chan. And we end the yearly journey thru films December 28th, with The Return of Charlie Chan (1971), starring Ross Martin. There were more than 58+ interesting topics discussed throughout the year on the “Message board”! And in case you’d like to see what happens during the Monday “chats”, when members gather to watch a Chan movie, visit the Chat Archive reaching back to 2010. We hope you enjoy our collection of happenings for 2020, and the various articles below. If we’ve missed something our most humble apologies. And, if you have or know of anything for 2021, please send it to: charliechanfamily@yahoo.com
ACTRESS FRANCES CHAN AS CHARLIE CHAN’s DAUGHTER…FRANCES CHAN.

By Webmaster Rush Glick

In August 2020, our Weekly Chat and film viewing featured Black Magic (also known as: Meeting at Midnight.) In this film we meet Charlie Chan’s daughter, Frances, played by Actress Frances Chan!

She could be presumed to be the Chan’s Number Three Daughter as Frances Chan also appeared in Charlie Chan’s Greatest Case, and through the image of the gathered family (below) we can see the then-eight-year-old Frances as the apparent third-oldest of four depicted daughters as she stands next to her Pop. At this time in Chan family history, Mr. and Mrs. Chan (of film) had 12 children, of which 10 are pictured, and the two not seen could safely be presumed to have been in bed asleep as the Chan family gathered very early that morning to see their famous Pop called away to a murder case!
Here is some interesting information that Frances Chan's son posted on the Internet (including typos, etc.):

"My mother Frances Chan, a.k.a. Frances C. Eng is now passed away. She and my father owned the Sunset Pacific Motel for 40 years which is only a mile away from the studios where she filmed "Meeting at Midnight" back in 1943 at age 18. She was 79 years old when she fell down the stairs and passed away in 2004.

"She never saw the moving "Meeting at Midnight" until age 70 when I saw it on TV and called her on the phone. Until then it was on some shelf at some studio archives. Her pay at the time was only $800.00.

"Frances Chan's career ended when she married my father Edward J. Eng in 1944. They lived about a mile from the Monogram Studios where "Meeting at Midnight" was filmed. It is now KCET studios. They have 5 children, 4 daughters and 1 son, myself. The have 9 grandchildren. My parents owned a lot of real estate around Los Angeles. So even though her career as an actress did not endure her career as the landlady collecting rent lasted for 60 years.

"Frances Chan's movie career included "The Good Earth 1937", "Samurai 1945" and "God is My Copilot." Her parents Anthony (Suey) Chan and Mary Chan also acted and had numerous bit parts as Chinese actors during the 1930s and 1940s. They were close friends with Keye Luke, Peanuts, and Anna Mae Wong, who were the major Chinese actors during this time period.

"Frances Chan got her start by being Miss Chinatown in 1939, and a search of the Los Angeles Times from that period will bring up several articles on her."

Frances Chan is also the ONLY Chan daughter to work with her "Pop" alone on an adventure. It is also fun, I feel, that Frances Chan shared her real name with that of the character she portrayed onscreen! How nice would it have been had she appeared in more Chan films?

( Frances Chan, March 10, 1925 – March 14, 2004)

“Always pleasant journey which ends among old friends” (Charlie Chan’s Courage)
COLLECTING MYSTERY FICTION by Otto Penzler (*The Armchair Detective*, 1982, Volume 15, Number 2)

By Lou Armagno

It is with great delight, and the permission of Mr. Otto Penzler, we bring you a wonderful 7-page article, first published in 1982, *The Armchair Detective* Magazine ($4 an issue back then), and re-released through The Mysterious Bookshop, as Collecting Mystery Fiction #2, Earl Derr Biggers’ Charlie Chan, October 1999, a descriptive bibliography and price guide.

The link to the article is on the following page. However, I’d first like to share what I recently found while searching for a first edition Chan novel, then a mint copy, then an autographed copy, then a…well, the list for collecting goes on-and-on as explained by Mr. Penzler in his article accessed on the next page. The following excerpt is from a private library collection sold through Christies Auction House, NY, in 2002:

**THE DETECTIVE FICTION LIBRARY OF RICHARD M. LACKRITZ, MD**

17 April 2002, New York

SALE TOTAL: 325,171 (USD)

244 Lots for Sale 1104

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<tr>
<th>LOT</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Price Realized</th>
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<td>13</td>
<td>BIGGERS, Earl Derr (1884-1933). <em>Seven Keys to Baldpate</em>. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company</td>
<td>$400 - $600</td>
<td>$538</td>
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While I could not delve further into the sale for each individual item (the auction closed some 18 years ago,) it is highly likely those in the thousands of dollars were first editions, or autographed and signed with a special inscription. Mr. Penzler told me that in today’s market it is unlikely the same editions would sell for any more than they did in 2002. And anyone who has seen Antiques Roadshow on PBS knows the price at auction depends on current demand. By the way, Mr. Penzler’s first edition copy of *The Chinese Parrot* (pictured on page 1 of this newsletter) recently sold at auction for $1,937.50, December 5, 2020!

Well, I have delayed long enough! Here is the link to that wonderful article—and advice—on collecting mystery fiction by Mr. Penzer, at: The Charlie Chan Home, Study. Now permit me to add a bit of advice myself. When dealing with an old soul like Mr. Penzler, it is best not to enter into debate—like who had more big screen movies Charlie Chan or Sherlock Holmes! I will leave you with these two aphoristic pieces of counsel from Charlie Chan himself, in regard to that:

“The tongue of age speaks with accumulated wisdom and is heard gladly, but the tongue of youth should save it’s strength” (The Black Camel)

“The deer should not play with the tiger” (Charlie Chan Carries On)
TAKE A WALK “BEHIND THAT CURTAIN” WITH CHARLIE CHAN.
BY BREENDA MCNEAL

Who doesn’t love a walking tour! When visiting a new city or country a walking tour can be one of the best ways to get to know the area and surroundings. The cheese factories in Amsterdam, Holland, the “Alt Stadt” (old city) in Kaiserslautern, Germany, The Jack the Ripper Walk in Jolly ’ole London, England and the butterfly mountain in Taipei, Taiwan; all are better experienced on foot!

Well, Brenda McNeal, longtime “regular” of the Charlie Chan Family Home, has put together a walk for us that Detective Charlie Chan himself took in the mystery novel, Behind That Curtain (1928.) In this, the third of six Chan novels, Charlie is anxious to set sail for home aboard the cruise ship Maui to see his newborn son, the 11th and final of his children, Barry Chan. However, when retired Scotland Yard inspector Sir Fredrick Bruce is murdered in the study of one of San Francisco’s prominent citizens, at the very dinner Charlie is attending, he finds it hard to let go. Determined to leave and aboard ship ready to set sail, he overhears voices in the next cabin that are connected to the investigation. Struggling with the decision he jumps ship just before they pull up the gang plank!

Before his death, Sir Fredrick was on the trail of one Eve Durand, who mysteriously disappeared 15 years ago, while at a picnic in Peshawar, colonial, India. He asks Charlie to question one Li Gung, a Chinese now staying with relatives in Chinatown, San Francisco and connected to the case. Having declined to subterfuge on one of his own race, Charlie later takes up that very task—a clue—as he investigates Sir Fredrick’s death.

Here, Brenda takes us through todays streets of San Francisco, following the same (or likely) path, which Charlie Chan took to visit the home of his own relative Lee Kim, then various locations—Waverly Place, The Tong House, etc.—on the trail to the house of Henry Li, where Li Gung is staying.

So follow along the next several page as Brenda McNeal takes us on a jaunt through today’s Chinatown, San Francisco with Detective Charlie Chan in: Behind That Curtain (1928), Chapter 8, “Willie Li’s Good Turn”!

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Actor E. L. Park as Charlie Chan

Actor Boris Karloff as Servant
In “Behind that Curtain”, Chan is in San Francisco’s Chinatown. Specifically, he visits the Kirk building somewhere on California near the financial district.

1. So this tour begins on California street, east of Kearny street in the Financial district.

PHOTO: Standing at the corner of California & Sansome Sts. Looking down (and I do mean down) and West on California. Chan was very hardy!
2. Turning right onto the shop-lined **Grant street** allows you to follow after Chan as he walks to the home of his relative **Kee Lim**.

PHOTO: Standing at the corner of California & Grant Sts. Looking up (and I do mean up) and West on California. Here Chan turned right towards the shops on Grant St.

PHOTO: Standing on Grant St looking north.

3. He would make a left turn (west and up hill) onto **Washington St**.

PHOTO: At the corner of Grant & Washington Sts, looking west & up Washington. The hill makes it a hardy walk.
4. About half a block west (up hill) is the short (2 block) alley of Waverly Place. Described as “gloomy” in the book, it is along here that Kee Lim (Chan’s relative) lived as well as the Tong house (one of many “Benevolent Societies” run by various Chinese clans).

PHOTO Below: Beginning of Waverly off Washington. Looking west and up Washington St.

PHOTO Right: Looking south along the 2 blocks of Waverly Place.

PHOTO Left & Below: Two of the Benevolent Associations that lines Waverly Place.
5. From here, Chan set out for the apartment of Henry Li. Stepping out again to Waverly Place, he would head north/left once again onto Washington street.

PHOTO Left: The far south end of Waverly ends at Commercial St.

PHOTO Right: Looking north from the end of the 2 blocks of Waverly.

6. Chan would have walked on until meeting Stockton street where he would turn right/north onto Jackson St.

PHOTO: Walking up and west on Jackson St towards the residential building and passing the Chinese Hospital along the way.
7. He would continue until meeting the residential street of Jackson and would turn left/west, moving up hill for many blocks. Somewhere along here was the apartment of Henry Li - in a three story “gaudy” building in American style with "bathrooms and other strange developments of what the white devil is pleased to call his civilization."

PHOTO Left: Heading west & up on Washington into the residential area. Note the 3-story “gaudy” American buildings.

PHOTO Right: Not every house was as American looking.
8. After his visit to Li’s apartment, Chan sought out a drug store - probably taking Jackson street east/back down the hill to Stockton where the shops are located.

PHOTO: Standing at the corner of Jackson & Stockton Sts. Looking east and down Jackson St. Stockton is a main shopping street.

9. From here he started to return to the Kirk Building, probably turning right and walking south on Stockton street.

10. Once at California street e would turn left and walk east to get to the bungalow crowning the 21st floor of the Kirk building.

PHOTO: Standing at the corner of Stockton & California Sts. Looking south on Stockton.
PHOTO: Standing at the corner of Stockton & California Sts. Looking north on Stockton. Stockton comes to a halt overlooking Chinatown. Stairs on the left take you down to the lower Stockton street level.

PHOTO: Standing at the corner of Stockton & California Sts. Looking up and west on California St. Thank goodness Cablecars can take you uphill!
2021 A NEW YEAR...AND BEYOND.
By Lou Armagno


The OX happens to be the “second” in the twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac. According to myth, the Jade Emperor called all animals of the universe together for a race. He decreed the first 12 animals to finish would be rewarded with a year dedicated in their honor, and according to the order in which they arrived. Rat was the first to arrive. He rode upon the back of the water buffalo (OX), and when they got to their destination, jumped off to finish first! The calendar repeats every 12 years. This cute video easily explains the tale, and reveals, why cat and rat are forever enemies: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lw0adpGLIdk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lw0adpGLIdk).

Oxen are known for diligence, dependability, strength and determination. Having an honest nature, Oxen are strongly patriotic, have ideals and ambitions for life, and attach importance to family and work. Having great patience and a desire to make progress, Oxen can achieve their goals by consistent effort. They are not much influenced by others or the environment, but persist in doing things according to their ideals and capabilities. Visit: [https://www.chinahighlights.com/travelguide/chinese-zodiac/ox.htm](https://www.chinahighlights.com/travelguide/chinese-zodiac/ox.htm).

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**RE-RELEASE THE HOUSE WITHOUT A KEY (1925)** It’s hard to imagine, but 96 years after the first release of the Charlie Chan Mystery, *The House Without a Key*, it is being re-released as an ebook. The Mysterious Press, founded in 1975 by Otto Penzler, is devoted to printing the best mystery, crime and suspense books. They have taken books from some of the most distinguished crime, mystery and suspense writers in the world, offering them to readers in digital reading formats. Charles Perry, Publisher at Penzler Publishing, said “we are thrilled to be able to publish a book in the (Chan) series.” And there will (of course) be an introduction by Mr. Penzler to the novel. Why such interest in a detective with only six novels, almost a century later? As Mr. Penzler writes in his Intro, “…Charlie Chan’s personal popularity played a part in the Renaissance of the American detective story that cannot be ignored.” So if you like American Classic Mysteries served-up on
your favorite IT device, watch for The House Without a Key (1925) release, in January 2021 at: http://www.mysteriouspress.com/.

WHO WILL BE “NEXT” TO PORTRAY CHARLIE CHAN ON THE BIG SCREEN? Impossible or inevitable? That is the $50M dollar question we will broach in January 2021 on the Charlie Chan Family Home Message Board. Whatever your view on the topic, here is your chance to input on who might be tagged to portray Detective Chan at the movies. Interested? Just sign up for the monthly blog https://thepostmanonholiday.com/ before January 1st, 2021 (or visit the site afterwards) for more details.

THE END

“May your entire journey be on the sunny side of the road”

(Keeper of The Keys (1932), Chap 8)
THE CHARLIE CHAN DVD “FEATURETTES” & WHERE TO FIND THEM
By Steve Fredrick and Lou Armagno (2018)

One aspect of the Charlie Chan DVDs often overlooked, are the mini “featurettes” one finds at the main menu; usually, listed as “Other Features,” “Special Features,” or something similar. These small snippets are extremely entertaining tidbits of education and take us behind the scenes of these prospective film productions.

Listed below, please find our index of some thirty extremely entertaining and enlightening shorts and the DVDs where you’ll find them. We’ve omitted any “Theatrical Trailers” or “Still Galleries.” Happy Hunting!

(Note: Our illustrious Charlie Chan Family Home webmaster appears in no less than five!)

(20th Century Fox) Charlie Chan, Volume 1 (20 Jun 2006)

1. Featurette - Eran Trece (full Spanish-Language Version of the lost film, Charlie Chan Carries On) (1931)
   CAST (Main): Manuel Arbo (Charlie Chan), Rafael Calvo (Inspector Duff), Juan Corena (Dick Kennaway), Ana Maria Custodio (Elen Potter).
   DVD: Charlie Chan in Shanghai.

   Director/Writer: John Cork.
   CAST: Jon L. Breen, DeSoto Brown, Janice Clapoff, Rush Glick, Barbara Gregorich, Ken Hanke, James G. Y. Ho, Sheri Kagimoto, Kanoelehua Miller, Judy Narita, Layne Tom Jr., Valerie Yaros.
   DVD: Charlie Chan in London.

   Director/Writer: John Cork.
   CAST: Howard Berlin, Jon L. Breen, Rusty Cundieff, Rush Glick, Barbara Gregorich, Ken Hanke, Carla Winter, Paul Wurtzel, Valerie Yaros.

   Director/Writer: John Cork.
   DVD: Charlie Chan in Egypt.

(20th Century Fox) Charlie Chan, Volume 2 (5 Dec 2006)

5. Featurette - Charlie Chan’s Lucky Director: H. Bruce Humberstone (2006)
Director/Writer: John Cork & Bruce Scivally.
CAST: Eve Brent, Jordana Gainsworth, Rush Glick, Ken Hanke, Scott McIsaac, Johnny Scheffield.
DVD: Charlie Chan at the Opera.

Director/Writer: John Cork & Bruce Scivally.
CAST: Tom Layne Jr.
DVD: Charlie Chan at the Olympics.

Director/Writer: John Cork & Bruce Scivally.
DVD: Charlie Chan at the Race Track.

Director/Writer: John Cork & Bruce Scivally.
CAST: Jordana Gainsworth, Rush Glick, C. Courtney Joyner, Sara Karloff, Scott McIsaac.
DVD: Charlie Chan at the Circus.

*(20th Century Fox) Charlie Chan, Volume 3 (14 Aug 2007)*

(Commentary that can be played in synch with the movie).
DVD: Charlie Chan’s Secret.

CAST: Ronald Thomas, Matthew Pearl, Dr. Henry C. Lee.
DVD: Charlie Chan’s Secret.

Director/Writer: John Cork.
CAST: Dr. Henry Lee
DVD: Charlie Chan’s Secret.

12. Featurette - Commentary by Film Critic Ken Hanke and Film Historian John Cork (2007)
(Commentary that can be played in synch with the movie).
DVD: Charlie Chan in The Black Camel.

Director/Writer: (D) John Cork / (W) John Cork, Bruce Scivally, Lisa Van Eyssen.
Screenplay and Dialog: Philip Kleine and Barry Connere.
DVD: Charlie Chan in The Black Camel.

Director/Writer: John Cork.
CAST: Paul S. Oland, David Lewis, Ken Hanke, Valerie Yaros, Rush Glick, Kay Linaker.
DVD: Charlie Chan at Monte Carlo.

15. Featurette (Side 1) - Warner Oland is Charlie Chan (2007)
(Screen shots of lobby cards, posters, and advertisements featuring Oland as Chan).
DVD: Charlie Chan at Monte Carlo.

16. Featurette (Side 2) - Behind That Curtain -- The 1929 Film Featuring the First Appearance of the Charlie Chan Character at FOX (2007)
DVD: Charlie Chan at Monte Carlo.

Director/Writer: John Cork.
DVD: Charlie Chan on Broadway.

Director/Writer: John Cork.
CAST: Ken Hanke, Rush Glick, Suzanne Wilson Barnett.
DVD: Charlie Chan on Broadway.

(20th Century Fox) Charlie Chan, Volume 4 (12 Feb 2008)

Director/Writer: John Cork.
CAST: Scott McIsaac, Ken Hanke.
DVD: Charlie Chan in Honolulu.

Director/Writer: John Cork.
CAST: Miles Krueger, David Lewis.
DVD: Charlie Chan in Honolulu.

(Based on The Chinese Parrot)
Director/Writer: John Cork/Bruce Scivally and Lisa Van Eyssen.
DVD: Charlie Chan in Honolulu.

Director/Writer: John Cork and Lisa Van Eyssen.
CAST: Mella Harmon, William L. McGee, Pat Ferraro Klos, Judge Peter I. Breen,
DVD: Charlie Chan in Reno.
Director/Writer: Lisa Van Eyssen, John Cork.
DVD: Charlie Chan in Reno.

Director/Writer: John Cork.
CAST: Kay Linaker.
DVD: Charlie Chan in Reno.

DVD: Charlie Chan in the City in Darkness.

Director/Writer: John Cork & Lisa Van Eyssen.
CAST: John Cork, Scott McIsaac.
DVD: Charlie Chan in the City in Darkness.

27. Featurette - Commentary by Film Critic Ken Hanke and Film Historian John Cork (2008)
(Commentary that can be played in synch with the movie).
DVD: Charlie Chan at Treasure Island.

Director/Writer: John Cork & Lisa Van Eyssen.
CAST: Richard Reinhardt, Claire Isaacs Wahrhaftig, Gladys Hansen.
DVD: Charlie Chan at Treasure Island.

Director/Writer: John Cork & Lisa Van Eyssen.
DVD: Charlie Chan at Treasure Island.

(20th Century Fox) Charlie Chan, Volume 5 (16 Sep 2008)

CAST: John Cork, Scott McIsaac, Sharon Rosen Leib, Paul Wurtzel, David Wurtzel, Miles Kreuger, Ken Hanke, Jim Doherty, Didi Hunter, Lorenzo Semple, Jr.
DVD: Castle in the Desert.