
los angeles park for pictures Bronson Canyon

Posted by RFCSAC627N - 2008/05/16 18:33

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For 80 years the cave's four entrances have crawled with giant spiders, glacial monsters and space aliens, cowboys and Indians, futuristic crime-fighters and cavemen, and medieval knights, pioneer settlers and swashbuckling pirates. The quarry is a short trip up Canyon Drive from most Hollywood studios. Since filming permits are easy to come by from the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, the place is irresistible to movie and television producers. The finale to director John Ford's 1956 masterpiece western *The Searchers*, where John Wayne pursues Natalie Wood to the entrance of a cave, was filmed in Bronson Canyon. So were parts of 1962's *Ride the High Country*, Frank Capra's 1937 epic *Lost Horizon* and *The Sword and the Sorcerer*, released in 1982. The Batmobile roared out of one of the cave's openings in the title scene of the 1960s *Batman* TV series. Episodes of *Gunsmoke*, *The Lone Ranger*, *Rawhide*, *Bonanza*, *Little House on the Prairie*, *Have Gun, Will Travel*, *Bat Masterson*, *The Adventures of Rin Tin Tin*, *Star Trek Voyager* and *Wonder Woman* were shot there. The classic 1956 *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* owes part of its look to Bronson Canyon. So does 1941's *Adventures of Captain Marvel*, 1938's *Dick Tracy Returns* and the 1933 version of *The Three Musketeers*. Some contend that the B in B-movies stands for Bronson Canyon. Creatures from 1957's *Attack of the Crab Monsters* roamed the cave. It was turned into a mine shaft for 1958's *Return of Dracula*. A diving-bell-hooded gorilla stomped through the tunnel in *Robot Monster* — a film shot in 3-D entirely in the quarry over a four-day period in 1953 for \$16,000. If Bronson Canyon welcomes low-budget filmmakers, it embraces those with no budget too. That's the category that *The Mummy's Breath* falls into. It was being filmed last week at the cave by fledgling director Michael Schmitt of Pasadena and a volunteer cast and crew. Pith-helmeted Kenneth Gould of Thousand Oaks, Eric Bender of Newbury Park and fez-topped David Springhorn of Lake Balboa were being pursued from the cave by gauze-wrapped Mark Sellin of Mount Washington. Except for Springhorn, none of the khaki-costumed actors were experienced performers. Instead, each had taken the day off work as systems analysts and engineers to help Schmitt, a telephone company technician. They are part of a hobbyist movie-maker cooperative called Group 101 Films that hopes to produce mini-digital video shorts that will air at Halloween on cable TV's *American Movie Classics*. Bronson Canyon is reached by a short walk over a bridge and up a gated driveway on the east side of Canyon Drive's dead-end. Griffith Park visitors who happened upon *The Mummy's Breath* crew stood out of camera range when filming took place. One onlooker was recruited to hold the sun reflector that helped light the scene. Movie-makers always restore Bronson Canyon and the cave to its original appearance when they leave. That means fake gold-mine doors or snow made from soap suds are cleaned up and carted away. I was up here the other day and they'd built a wooden structure at one cave entrance that resembled a spider web, said visitor Frank Kysor who, with his father, Jack, often walks his dogs in Bronson Canyon. Twenty years ago I helped build a set at the entrance to one of the caves for a movie called 'Commando Squad.' We put up a headquarters and a bunch of huts and guard towers. This place has a lot of texture, said Kysor, now a Hollywood insurance man. Bronson Canyon is usually closed when professional film crews are working. But not always. Glenn Erickson, a Larchmont Village video editor and Internet video reviewer who writes under the name DVD Savant, recalls the time in 1991 when a guard invited him and his family into the tunnel after it was converted into a mock ice cave for a *Star Trek* movie. The place is so generic looking. And it has the ability to look big when it's really small, Erickson said. The tunnel is short but goes into three branches, and each has a different look. Erickson played detective to find Bronson Canyon the first time. He matched the terrain beneath the Hollywood sign with some old movie still photos from the remake of *Lost Horizon* to figure out its location. Finding it was very exciting. As I walked up, I recognized movie after movie, he said. I'm a filmmaker — I pay attention to detail. Although the quarry was operated by the Union Rock Co. from about 1903 into the 1920s, there are differences of opinion about the origin of the cave. Erickson suspects it may have been constructed for the 1922 movie *Robin Hood*, starring Douglas Fairbanks. You don't drill a 200-foot tunnel when it takes a half a minute to walk around the hill to get to the tunnel's other side, he said. The tunnel doesn't really go anywhere. But Griffith Park Ranger Mark Renteria said the cave was left behind from the rock-mining. And the tunnel's insides went everywhere. The rocks were used for everything from roads to railroad tracks to the breakwater at San Pedro, he said. Copyright 2003 Los Angeles Times

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Posted by R H Draney - 2008/05/16 18:33

The Batmobile roared out of one of the cave's openings in the title scene of the 1960s *Batman* TV series. The fact-

checkers let this one slip by...the title scene from the TV series was animated...the Batmobile leaving the cave was used in an oft-repeated bit of stock footage *within* almost every episode....r

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Posted by Precode - 2008/05/16 18:33

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Erickson suspects it may have been constructed for the 1922 movie *Robin Hood*, starring Douglas Fairbanks. You don't drill a 200-foot tunnel when it takes a half a minute to walk around the hill to get to the tunnel's other side, he said. The tunnel doesn't really go anywhere. But Griffith Park Ranger Mark Renteria said the cave was left behind from the rock-mining. And the tunnel's insides went everywhere. The rocks were used for everything from roads to railroad tracks to the breakwater at San Pedro, he said. What timing! We're just in the initial stages of transferring my new instant classic, *THE LOST SKELETON OF CADAVERA*, to film; it was, of course, shot there. In fact, the canyon is the opening shot of the film. Too bad they didn't interview us! BTW, I've often thought someone could make a swell documentary about

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Posted by Jim Beaver - 2008/05/16 18:33

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Posted by Tony Spadaro - 2008/05/16 18:33

Back when I was a kid watching at least one kiddy western a day on tv, I realised that far from the wide open spaces we were being told about, the American West was a tiny little place. Watching Roy Roders, Gene AUtry, John Wayne and a half dozen others pass through the same rocks where The Lone Ranger and Silver always made their entrance, was only part of it. Even seeing newer westerns in theaters didn't dispel the feeling - not when in the course of one Saturday afternoon matinee the James Brothers lived in the same white house during the second feature as Audie Murphy had inhabited in the first. But then, every land rush I remember seeing was just one land rush - there's the wagon that's going to hit the rock and flip again! I've seen the Wm. S. Hart movie much (if not all) of that footage comes from, but haven't seen the Richard Dix version of Cimarron, which is where (I'm told) the rest all came from. I find Dix hard to take and the Glen Ford version of Cimarron was more than enough for one lifetime.

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Posted by Brent Walker - 2008/05/16 18:33

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Posted by Precode - 2008/05/16 18:33

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Perhaps I'll catch the beginning next time it's on. I believe Cimarron is another Edna Ferber wheezer - I was too young to know what that meant when the Glen Ford version came out. I was also too young to read the most famous review Cimarron, and on, and on, and on... At any rate the land rush is about a month into the Ford version, but I can always tape the Dix and zip forward to the big scene.

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Posted by Stephen Cooke - 2008/05/16 18:33

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Posted by Frederica - 2008/05/16 18:33

Cimarron you can watch the land rush part of and then turn off, basically. It's actually more of a women's picture than a western, she's the main character. Well yeah, of course. A WOMAN as the main character? Reason enough not to watch it. Frederica (snarl)

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Posted by TMRIEGLER - 2008/05/16 18:33

Well yeah, of course. A WOMAN as the main character? Reason enough not to watch it. Fascinating. This doesn't seem to bother the guys watching all the Pre-Codes. Sure, as long as she wearing her scanties or less, they can deal with a women as the main character. Otherwise it's a chick flick... Terri Riegler A swell start you gave me. Nothing but men, dirty rotten men, and you lower than any of them. Barbara Stanwyck in BABYFACE

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Posted by Precode - 2008/05/16 18:33

basically. It's actually more of a women's picture than a western, she's the main character. Well yeah, of course. A WOMAN as the main character? Reason enough not to watch it. Frederica (snarl) The same is true of HOW THE WEST WAS WON: the only one who appears start to finish is Debbie Reynolds! Mike S. (currently working on a remake set in the garment district: HOW THE VEST VAS VON)

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Posted by Michael Laurino - 2008/05/16 18:33

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Posted by James Russell - 2008/05/16 18:33

Mike S. (currently working on a remake set in the garment district: HOW THE VEST VAS VON) With guest appearances by Eric Von Stroheim and Josef Von Sternberg? James R.

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Posted by Bruce Calvert - 2008/05/16 18:33

On 12 May 2003 16:47:17 -0700, michael_schlesin...@spe.sony.com (Precode) wrote: Mike S. (currently working on a remake set in the garment district: HOW THE VEST VAS VON) With guest appearances by Eric Von Stroheim and Josef Von Sternberg? And also Harvey Lembeck as Eric Von Zipper from BEACH BLANKET BINGO (1965). Eric Von Zipper adores you. And when Eric Von Zipper adores somebody, they stay adored. Bruce Calvert

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Posted by Greta de Groat - 2008/05/16 18:33

Cimarron you can watch the land rush part of and then turn off, basically. It's actually more of a women's picture than a western, she's the main character. Gee, i was pleasantly surprised by Cimarron. I thought it was going to be one of those dumb westerns. greta

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Posted by Stephen Cooke - 2008/05/16 18:33

On Tue, 13 May 2003 12:32:20 GMT, in article <3ec0e5b7.18762...@news.ans.com.au, James Russell stated... On 12 May 2003 16:47:17 -0700, michael_schlesin...@spe.sony.com (Precode) wrote: Mike S. (currently working on a remake set in the garment district: HOW THE VEST VAS VON) With guest appearances by Eric Von Stroheim and Josef Von Sternberg? And also Harvey Lembeck as Eric Von Zipper from BEACH BLANKET BINGO (1965). Eric Von Zipper adores you. And when Eric Von Zipper adores somebody, they stay adored. Why me? Why always me? swac He is my idol.

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Posted by Frederica - 2008/05/16 18:33

greta I got taken to see Patton a couple of weeks ago. I was SO bored. Can you believe it, it only had men in it.

What a waste of good 70mm. Frederica

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Posted by William Ferry - 2008/05/16 18:33

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