

Howard Epstein

PASSAGES



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Picture Editor

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July 24, 2016

by Stu Epstein

Veteran film editor Howard Epstein passed away July 24, 2016. He was 99 years old. Howard was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and attended the University of Minnesota for a year before transferring to the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. He always wanted to be in the motion picture business because his family was involved in it, distributing and exhibiting films. But Howard was more interested in doing production.

After USC, Howard got a job at MGM in the film editing department as an apprentice. He worked there for several years and was then drafted into the Army. He was assigned to a motion picture unit in Fort Monmouth, New Jersey after basic training. He worked as an editor of training films. When the unit was transferred to Long Island City, New York, Howard was sent there and assigned to work on *Army-Navy Screen Magazine*, a short-film program and series which was shown to the American soldiers around the world during World War II.

While in New York, Howard met his future wife June. They married in 1945. After Howard's discharge from the Army, they returned to Los Angeles, and Howard went back to work at MGM Studios as a sound effects editor, and later as an assistant editor on motion pictures. He worked on the Todd-AO big-screen version of Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Oklahoma*. Afterwards, he was hired by Mike Todd to work on *Around the World in Eighty Days* because of his previous experience with the Todd-AO system. Todd-AO was shot in 70mm for the big screen, but it also made a small-screen version (35mm) for general release. Howard was assigned to that version and received his first screen credit. He then worked on some independent features: *The Devil's Partner*, *The Girl in Lovers Lane*, *The Littlest Hobo* and several others.

Howard was then hired by Universal Studios to work in television. His first assignment was *Whispering Smith*, and he also worked on *Riverboat*, *Alcoa Premiere*, *Checkmate*, *Bob Hope Chrysler Theatre*, *Counterpoint*, *The Hell with Heroes*, *Marcus Welby, MD*, *Ironside*, *The Six Million Dollar Man*, *Ellery Queen*, *Emergency* and others. After 14 years at Universal, he edited independent features for television, including *Telethon*, *Murder at the Mardi Gras*, *The Pirate* and *Side Show*.

Next, Howard went to Warner Bros. and worked on *The Dukes of Hazzard*. He retired after several years because his wife had been diagnosed with cancer and he wanted to spend as much time with her as possible.

An avid golfer, fisherman and Dodger fan, Howard moved to Atria, a senior citizens home in Thousand Oaks, which is where he met Gloria, and they had been a couple ever since. Howard is survived by sons Bruce and Stuart, daughters-in-law Lu and Francine, grandchildren Jonathan, Adrienne and Blaise, and four great-grandchildren.