

"One Against the Wind" recalls wartime heroism

Davis, Neill solid; script, direction excel

By Steven Alan McGaw

The name of Mary Lindell may mean little today, even for students of history. But for hundreds of Allied soldiers and airmen downed in occupied France during World War II, the name "Marie Claire" meant everything—it meant freedom.

Defying Nazi threats on her life, Lindell was unwavering in her commitment, even after a dismal nine-months imprisonment. By war's end, her "Marie Claire" line had helped hundreds of otherwise-trapped Allied servicemen to escape from German hands.

Now, the prestigious Hallmark Hall of Fame, in its 170th production, brings Lindell's dramatic story to life in "One Against the Wind," airing Sunday, Dec. 1, on CBS. Assembling the production team for this project was a labor of love for executive producer Karen Mack, who resolved in 1987 to bring this dramatic story to the screen. Larry Elkann, known for the powerful "I Know My First Name Is Steven," directed the movie from a script by Chris Bryant ("Young Catherine"). Judy Davis ("A Passage to India") heads the cast as Lindell, with fine support from Denholm Elliott ("A Room With a View") and her co-star from 1979's "My Brilliant Career," Sam Neill.

Neill, who is known for his taut performances in films like "Dead Calm" and "The Hunt for Red October," plays James Leggatt, the first man whom Mary Lindell helps to escape. Later an intelligence officer in the British army, Leggatt aids Lindell in her efforts, and their obvious mutual attraction only increases their devotion to their cause.

In preparing for the role, Neill did the usual amount of research, reading the archival materials the filmmakers had prepared for him. He also had an advantage in his personal life. "People asked me, 'How did you prepare to play a British army major?' I said it wasn't difficult—I grew up with one."

Neill's father had, indeed, been a

major in the British army, but had never discussed his experience until shortly before his death. "He finally did describe that critical period of his life to me," the actors says gratefully. "It was an accident, really," he says, that his father's reminiscences dovetailed with work he would shortly begin on "One Against the Wind." The information was especially helpful, says Neill, because the real James Leggatt is deceased. "I couldn't find out a lot about him," he says.

Davis' preparations for playing Lindell were aided by the presence of Lindell's son, Maurice (played superbly in the film by young Christien Anholt). Davis particularly treasures Mr. Lindell's reactions after first watching a scene she was in. When the cameras stopped, he rushed forward to say how accurately she had portrayed his mother. "It was a very emotional moment," says Davis.

Filmed in Luxembourg ("a slightly schizophrenic country,"

jokes Neill, "It doesn't know if it's Belgium or France or Germany."), this latest Hallmark Hall of Fame presentation is full of very emotional moments, all the while retaining an accurate historical atmosphere and never feeling contrived. Bryant's teleplay does a masterful job of compressing a lot of information into a brief period of time.

It is the performances of the actors, however, that give the film its strength, especially Davis' rich, human Mary Lindell. Neill is quietly powerful as Leggatt and Elliott's portrayal of a pragmatic priest passionately dedicated to Lindell's work is up to his usual standard of excellence.

Amid a constant barrage of "searing, true-life dramas" and "sweeping historical epics," it may be easy for viewers to miss projects such as this. That would be a shame, for "One Against the Wind" is first-caliber filmmaking. Both entertaining and educational, it sheds light on the life and work of a woman fiercely dedicated to the idea, and the reality, of freedom.

find out he is sterile. Brooke would find out about Taylor's pregnancy and she would keep it from Ridge. Ridge would find out Brooke has been lying to him and then dump her for good. Brooke would then find out she is pregnant and run to tell Ridge, hoping to put a wedge between his and Taylor's relationship. Later on, Eric would find out the baby is really his and let Ridge know. Finally, Ridge would be free of Brooke and he and Taylor could be happy together. —Thank You, B.C. in Sparta, Calif.

Dear Reader: Some of your ideas may actually happen over the next few months.

Dear Candace: I am disgusted with *The Young and the Restless* story line of Nikki drinking and taking pills. It has gone on much too long. They shouldn't encourage those in pain to seek solace in drugs and alcohol. We need to boycott such stories for the health of American pain sufferers. The Y&R writers have gone bonko, and we're fed up. —Ruth Barker, Corning, N.Y.

Dear Reader: You do have a point. *The Young and the Restless* is known for dragging out bad story lines.

SOAP TALK

Lionel and Cassie not related

By Candace Havens

Dear Candace: I love *Santa Barbara*! I'm curious as to what the relationship between Cassie and Lionel is. —Thanks, L.S., Farmington Hills, Mich.

Dear Reader: Cassie found out last March she is Mina's daughter, which now means she is Lionel's sister. Now if only someone would tell Warren that his father is not Lionel, then he and Cassie could live happily ever after—or as happily as one can on a soap.

Dear Candace: *The Bold and the Beautiful* needs to end the scenario with Brooke and Ridge once and for all. They should let Eric leave Brooke, but not go back to Stephanie. I'd like to see Eric and Margo together and Bill and Stephanie together. Then Taylor should pass out in front of Brooke and Ridge. Taylor would go to the doctor and find out she is several months pregnant. Meanwhile, Blake would