

LET'S TALK

**Abby on 'Homefront';
Clara Bow remembered**

By Taylor Michaels

Q: My husband and I love the ABC show Homefront. Recently, my mother told me she read in another column, Dear Abby, that the show is being canceled. Please tell me it's not true! If it is, why? I know it's very popular in our area. —J. Rucinski, Esmond, Ill.

A: It's refreshing to know that Abby is branching out. Once satisfied with dispensing advice on party etiquette, she must have realized life's true happiness comes from television criticism. However, the plain truth is that Homefront has not been canceled and is only on summer hiatus while new episodes are being developed for the fall, when it will move to Thursday nights. Homefront was a successful show for ABC this year in their prime-time Tuesday lineup.

Q: I work in a retirement home for merchant marines. A resident there was once the shipmate of (actor) Cliff Robertson during World War II. When Ralph Edwards recalled Mr. Robertson's life on This Is Your Life in 1971, this man was invited to participate. He



They'll be back: Homefront's Harry O'Reilly, Sammi Davis-Voss

is so proud of that experience. He is not in good health. Could you tell me where to write to Cliff Robertson, in hopes he might consent to write this man? —Dee Bryson, Newport, N.C.

A: You may write to Robertson in care of his agent at ICM, 8899 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif., 90048.

Q: I've been trying to recall the name

of a western I saw on TV with Robert Preston. He and his family were traveling in a covered wagon and Preston kept rattlesnakes in a bag. Can you help? —Jessie Snyder, Fort Worth, Texas.

A: The Chisholms first aired on CBS as a miniseries in 1979. The story of a family's arduous journey westward co-starred Rosemary Harris and Ben Murphy. It proved so popular that the network brought it back as a series the next year. But when Preston's character passed away, so did the series.

Q: Can you tell me what Roy Rogers' real name is? I saw it on TV but can't remember what it was. It's the name of a wild animal but I can't think of which one. —Jennie Reese, Halfway, Mo.

A: A leopard can't change its spots, but Leonard Slye can and did change his name to Roy Rogers.

Q: I'm interested in knowing what happened to Clara Bow and her husband, Rex Bell. I'm an oldie, and she was my favorite — she was so pretty. I know she made Hoopla, The Fleet's In, Dangerous Curves, Wings and a couple of others. —M. Semenak, Ironwood, Mich.

A: Clara Bow passed away in 1965, three years after husband Rex Bell. Bow's film career was a bittersweet testament to the end of an era, where many silent-film stars were lost in the shuffle to movies with sound.

The daughter of an impoverished Coney Island writer, Bow won a bit part in a movie through a fan-magazine contest in 1921 when she was 16, and it launched her screen career. Her most famous role was in 1927's *It*. "It" was what we now call sex appeal, and Bow had it. She became a symbol of the flapper era and was known as the "It Girl." (The animated vamp Betty Boop was supposedly modeled after Bow.) But her sexuality fell out of favor with the public in the more conservative Depression era, and romantic scandals combined with her physical and mental fragility to bring her career to an end shortly after the advent of talkies. A meager comeback attempt failed, and Bow finally retired in 1933 after *Hoopla*, the last of her 55 films. Bow spent much of the next three decades in sanitariums.

After eloping with Bow in 1931, Rex Bell's career as a Western star slowed but didn't end until 1961 with a bit part in *The Misfits*, which starred Clark Gable and Marilyn Monroe. Bell was elected lieutenant governor of Nevada in 1954 and ran unsuccessfully for governor in 1958.

Please send your questions to Let's Talk, Features Department, P.O. Box 961009, Fort Worth, Texas, 76161-1009.

WORD SEARCH

S W W P E C O P P E R Y X Z E
O X G D U K D C X O E O G T C
L F E V L M N E Q R R H F I R E
I R T U B L Y I G Z I H M M N
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Colorful Movies
(Words in parentheses are in italics)

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| Forever A-Go (C)ron | (A) Clockwork Orange | (The) Rosa (I)ntox |
| (The) Scarle (P)rophecy | (The) Yellow (B)at (R)ider | (The) P.A. (P)artner |
| (The) Silver (C)halice | (The) Solid Gold (C)rystals | (I)nter in the (N)avy (N)ew |
| (The) Boy (W)ith Green Hair | (The) Ship (I)l Morning | (The) Crimson (B)lade |
| White (M)otion | (The) Brew (I)l Culture | Murdered |
| (The) End (O) the Back | Blue (H)orror | Purple Rain |
| | Grey (F)at | (The) Legend (O)f Bill |