

INTERVIEW INFORMATION:

Person: Mr Stanley Morgan

Location: Cheshire, England

Date: 22nd April 2007

Interviewer: Anders Frejdh, Sweden

Questions about your role as ‘Concierge in the casino’ in DR NO (1962)

1. How did you become involved in this film in the first place?

During 1960 and 1961 I had made three crime films at Merton Park Studios with Bernard Lee. Bernard played the part of a police superintendent and I was his sergeant. When Bernard landed the role of ‘M’ in Dr No, he recommended me to Terence Young for the part of the Casino Concierge.

2. How long did your scenes take to film and where were they filmed?

On location or/and at Pinewood? Any stories/anecdotes from the filming highly appreciated!

The Casino sequence was shot at Pinewood. I was on set for two days and real casino ‘chips’ were used for the gambling scenes. These arrived from a London casino in a large bag protected by security guards. They represented real money – the equivalent of £500,000 at current valuation. I jokingly asked Sean Connery how he would feel if they were stolen off the James Bond set. He grinned and said, ‘Extremely embarrassed’.

3. What are your impression about and special memories from the actors and filmmakers that you met during filming: Don’t know if you also met Ian Fleming?

- Cubby Broccoli? Did not meet Cubby.
- Harry Saltzman? Did not meet Harry.
- Sir Sean Connery? Impressive, Focussed, Professional.
- Eunice Gayson? Beautiful, Charming, Professional.
- Terence Young? Urbane, Confident, Professional.

I regret that I never did meet Ian Fleming.

4. Did you make any promotion for the film?

No, I was not involved in any promotion.

5. What is your best and most special memory from being involved in this film?

I was overwhelmed by the opulence of the Casino set. Working on a big-budget film in a major studio is such a different experience from that of small-budget films in minor studios or television. Simply setting foot on a big sound stage generates, for me, an excitement that will always remain in my memory. With hindsight, of course, the most special aspect of my involvement is that I shared the scene with Sean Connery in which James Bond is revealed to the cinema-going public for the first time! No one, at that time, had any idea that the franchise was going to succeed as it has, and I am proud to be associated with its fantastic success, to be part of the ‘James Bond family’.

Questions about your filming career outside the Bond film

6. How many films have you made after the Bond film?

I only made five films after Dr No. By 1966 I was concentrating more on writing.

My novel ‘The Sewing Machine Man’, featuring Russ Tobin, was published in 1968 and due to its success I was encouraged to write a sequel...and then another!

By 1974 the Russ Tobin series had sold over a million copies, and the decision had to be made to abandon acting in favour of writing. The series eventually went to eighteen novels and sold ten million copies. I have written a total of forty books.

7. Which film or films have you found difficult to make, if any?

None. I enjoyed every one of them. I loved the very process of filming. Stage and TV work did not particularly enthral me, particularly in the early days of 'live TV production' which was very stressful. But filming was always a joy.

8. Of all directors you have worked for, which one/ones do you like best?

I have liked them all. I have never encountered a director who was less than polite and helpful, in short – professional. However, if I am pressed to a single answer – then it has to be Bryan Forbes with whom I worked on 'Seance On A Wet Afternoon' and 'The L-Shaped Room'. Working with Bryan was sheer pleasure.

9. In what countries have you been working and which film studios do you consider to be a 'second home' because of much work based in them?

I only worked on one film abroad: 'The Sleepwalkers' starring Dyan Cannon. It was a very curious production, shot in 1959/60 in Portugal, entirely on location. I had the romantic lead role opposite Dyan, a lovely part, but unfortunately the producer ran foul of the English trade unions by employing non-union labour, and the film was never released. Great shame.

I suppose the old Merton Park Studios, just outside Wimbledon, could be regarded as my 'second home'. I did eight films there, four with Bernard Lee. Because the studios were small, it was possible to get to know everyone who worked there, and on arrival it was like being greeted by one's family. Alas the studios no longer exist. I think a housing estate now occupies the site.

10. Which is your favourite film doing and is it the same one you consider to be the best after you saw the final film?

I suppose because of the enormous success of the Bond series, and the focus of attention that keeps returning to my small role in Dr No, I have to regard this film as my favourite. I also regard it as a very enjoyable film in its own right.

11. Of all films you have done which one do you think have had the biggest impact on your career as an actor?

For the same reason I have given in Q10, Dr No has had the biggest impact on my career. The role of 'Casino Concierge', though comparatively minor, is immediately recognizable and memorable. Bond 'magic' is attached to it.

12. Did you become friends with any of the people you worked with in the Bond film and still see today?

Although I did not actually work with Bernard Lee in Dr No, we were great friends on and off screen for many years until he died. I have played many games of snooker with 'Bernie', and helped to decorate his home in Isleworth. Bernie was a great actor but hopeless with a paint brush or screwdriver.

Current filming projects and future

13. Are you doing any film or other acting work at this moment?

No, I now concentrate on writing. My latest book, a thriller TRANCE, has recently been published by Twenty First Century Publishers, and I am working on a sequel, and also the twentieth Russ Tobin adventure.

14. Which director would you like to work with again and which one would you like to a film with that hasn't happen until this day?

I would most certainly like to work with Bryan Forbes again. And considering the wonderful work he has done on Casino Royale, I would very much like to work with Martin Campbell.

15. Which actors/actresses/directors and others from the film business do you consider being among your best friends/colleagues?

Most of my film business contemporaries have by now, alas, retired or passed away. I do, however, enjoy enormously the reunion with colleagues whom I meet at the 'Bond Events', namely Lana Wood, Joe Robinson, Terence Mountain, Albert Moses, Gavan O'Herlihy and Linda Thorson. Attendance at these events gives me the greatest pleasure.

16. Would you consider an offer of doing another Bond film if it came to you?

If yes, what type of role would you like to play then?

I would *kill* for a part in another Bond film! What type of role? Either the evil 'Mister Big' ...or maybe James Bond's father!

17. Tell us a little bit about yourself i.e. background, education, family, where you live.

I was born in Liverpool, a city famous for its theatrical and musical talent, and attended the same school as Sir Paul McCartney – though in a different period.

Leaving school, I worked in a bank for a couple of years, served in the Army for two years, returned to the bank, then transferred to the Bank of Nova Scotia and emigrated to Canada.

After two years with the BNS I decided I wanted to see the world. I did several jobs to earn enough money to travel – including selling sewing machines and collecting debts – (The subjects of future books!) and also began acting on radio over CKFH Toronto.

With money saved, I emigrated to Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), and there began stage acting which brought an award for Best Actor.

Returning to London in 1959, I immediately found a niche as 'voice over' in TV commercials, courtesy of the radio training I had received in Toronto. During the next ten years I supplied the voice for over five hundred TV and radio commercials.

I now live very happily in rural Cheshire with my wife, Linda. We have four grown children all of whom have families of their own.

And finally:

What do you think about this James Bond site - FROM SWEDEN WITH LOVE?

I think it is an exceptionally fine site, very well designed and full of interesting and useful detail. I feel very privileged to be included in it.

Have you ever been in Sweden? If yes, please tell us when, where and how it was?

Alas, no, Linda and I have yet to visit your lovely country. We hope to rectify that omission in the near future.

MY SINCERE THANKS FOR PARTICIPATING, STANLEY!