



HERCULES MEETS SEALTEST DAN:

The Rediscovery of an Iron Game Icon

by John Fair, Ph.D.

What most tributes to Steve fail to comprehend is that he was also human, and attempts to idolize him as the perfect man risk losing sight of the fact that he, like everyone else, had to cope with the real world. His interactions with Dan Lurie, iron game promoter and publisher of *Muscle Training Illustrated* (MTI), in the early 1970s provide some insights into how even the brightest stars must inevitably reckon with age and withdrawal from the limelight.

Dan Lurie was a near contemporary to Steve Reeves. Though he possessed one of the best physiques of the 1940s and was thrice named Most Muscular Man in Mr. America contests, he had repeatedly failed to capture the top title. During the 1950s, however, Lurie rose to national prominence as Sealtest Dan the Musclemán on a popular circus show that was broadcast on Saturday afternoons from WCAU in Philadelphia. In the mid-1960s Lurie launched a vigorous promotional campaign, featuring the establishment of a World Bodybuilding Guild (WBBG), grandiose (America, World, Olympus) physique titles, a full line of weightlifting

At the 1973 WBBG Professional Mr. America Contest in Manhattan, Dan Lurie crowned Steve Reeves as the "World's Greatest Bodybuilder." Reeves' wife, Aline, looks on as Lurie told the audience, "This is the proudest moment of my busy life."

It happened with Paul Anderson in 1994, and it happened with John Grimek in 1998. And now it is happening again with Steve Reeves—as countless well-meaning pundits rush their tributes to the latest fallen iron game hero into print. It is not that Steve does not deserve to be eulogized—far from it. He was not only one of the handsomest and best built men of his era, but led a clean, dignified, and scandal-free life. Furthermore, and this is his chief claim to fame, Reeves was virtually the only bodybuilder prior to Arnold Schwarzenegger to translate his muscles into money and international renown through a successful film career.¹

apparatus, and a magazine—*Muscle Training Illustrated*—to publicize these endeavors. He even appropriated the title of "The Champion Maker."² By this time, however, other promoters—Bob Hoffman, Joe and Ben Weider, and Peary Rader—had established a seemingly insurmountable lead in these areas, and it was easy to perceive Lurie as a copy-cat trying desperately to gain ground in the physical culture market. Although he regularly featured leading bodybuilders and iron game authors in his magazine, he needed to attract a superstar—a John Grimek or a Clancy Ross, a Bill Pearl or a

Larry Scott—to lend credibility to his cause.

Steve Reeves, as Mr. America (1947), Mr. World (1948), and Mr. Universe (1950), had won all the top physique titles that had eluded Lurie. Additionally, from 1954 to 1968 he appeared in eighteen films (often as the lead) and amassed a tidy fortune. Reeves' role of "Hercules" in the late 1950s was the lasting image he projected to adoring movie audiences. He was the top box office draw for 1959 and starred in nine more films over the next four years. By this time, however, his career was languishing as he was well into middle age and no longer as suited for the sword-and-sandal epics that had become his hallmark. It was fortunate that he was able to retire inasmuch as his lifestyle and public persona hardly coincided with the cultural revolution that swept America and the world in the late 1960s. Nude scenes were totally out of character for Steve, he was repulsed by steroid-induced physiques, and he sought consolation in various solitary health and fitness pursuits. Screen icons of the 1950s were no longer in vogue. "Steve Reeves was a Hercules for another time" is one obituarial assessment.³ The early 1970s was a period of mid-life introspection for Steve when he could reflect on what his career had meant, think about the future, and contemplate his legacy. It was also a time when he was particularly vulnerable to solicitations from iron game promoters eager to rescue him from obscurity-

As with Grimek and Anderson, Steve was gifted with an immense hereditary advantage. His body responded easily to weight training in size, strength, and proportion. In an early article in *Muscle Training Illustrated*, Earle Liederman recalls his "discovery" of the 16 year-old Reeves behind the scenes at a Los Angeles physique show in 1942. When asked "how he had secured such wonderful calves," Steve responded that it had come from lots of bicycle riding, especially up hills. "In all my long life-time I have done, and also had done at this particular occasion," explained Liederman, "considerably more bicycle riding than this young chap ever had done at his age; and I ask you, did I get 18½ inch calves? I did NOT!" Liederman concluded, like virtually all other observers and Steve himself, that this boy wonder was a "natural"⁴ Subsequent issues of *Muscle Training Illustrated* continued to feature Reeves. A gossip column in 1968 called him the "Last of the Mohicans," noting in his latest release, *Sandokan the Great*, that "Steve's wrinkles may be showing . . . but his

bank account is young and ever beautiful."⁵ When Jim Haislop won the 1969 AAU Mr. America contest, he attributed his inspiration to seeing Reeves' Hercules films while serving a hitch in the Navy.⁶ Publisher Robert Kennedy, a long-time aficionado of Reeves, even thought he might return to heavy training and show up for a guest appearance at one of the big annual muscle shows. "He is certainly not too old to do so. Nor is it beyond his ability."⁷ That Steve might be a candidate for cult figure status was evident in an article featuring milestones of his career. *Muscle Training Illustrated* also carried regular advertisements for his movie and bodybuilding photographs and even a WBBG Bodybuilder of the Month centerfold of him in his prime.⁸ Part of his potential appeal to bodybuilders was that he had become a scarce commodity. Reclusive by nature, Reeves retired after his last film in 1968 and sought peace and solitude at his mountain retreat in Switzerland, his cattle ranch in Oregon, and his horse ranch in California.

As a result of this seclusion, an air of mystery about his condition and whereabouts permeated the July 1972 issue of *Muscle Training Illustrated*, leading Denie (Dennis Walter) to speculate that Reeves could be severely ill or in serious trouble. These rumors alerted the enquiring mind of Dan Lurie and spurred him to action. Sealtest Dan discovered, through an "agent," that Steve was well and living comfortably at his home in the Alps. Reeves' response to this continuing concern by his bodybuilding fans reveals that he was beginning to think of himself as an anachronism. "I can't understand why today after all these years people still are interested in me. . . . I just want to be left alone and live my life quietly, doing what I'm interested in." It is hardly surprising that he declined Lurie's offer of \$1,000 to emcee the WBBG Professional Mr. America contest in 1971.⁹ But Lurie persisted, through his "special envoy," and managed to draw the former star out of hiding for the 1973 event at Hunter College in Manhattan. Unlike emceeing, the prospect of accepting "The Dan Lurie Award" recognizing him as "The World's Greatest Bodybuilder" proved an attractive lure. Lurie was rhapsodic about his success in associating Reeves with his movement, calling it "a dream fulfilled." In the actual plaque presentation on September 8, Lurie told Steve that "This is the proudest moment of my busy life to have you honor my organization and myself with your presence." In a sense, this whole ceremony was more an honor for the honorer than it was for the honoree!

Additionally Dan paraded Reeves and his wife Alina around the Big Apple television talk show circuit, including interviews with comic Soupy Sales and “Mr. Warmth,” Howard Cosell. Reeves was also awarded a Key to the City by Commissioner of Parks, Joseph Davidson, and September 8 was designated Physical Culture Day in honor of Reeves. Steve’s responses to these accolades were modest and banal, with references to his love of outdoor life and the Morgan horses he raised at his ranch. It was not so much the substance of anything he said that counted but his appearance. Lurie used every opportunity to attach his own success as a promoter to the honors bestowed upon Reeves. “Many did not believe,” boasted *MTI*, “that Dan Lurie could produce Steve Reeves . . . to even get him here . . . and to see that the City of New York gave him the Key to the City. As one reporter put it: ‘Dan Lurie is the Mike Todd of the Bodybuilding World!’”¹⁰

Energized by this publicity coup, Lurie sought further opportunities to appropriate Hercules to his cause. Acting under the rationale that Reeves was needed back in motion pictures “to inspire the general public to take up the healthful recreation and sport of physical culture,” Lurie had secured from Steve an admission “that he might return if the right part was available.” Lurie learned that a Hollywood producer was looking for an actor to play the fictional character Doc Savage, which had appeared in pulp magazines and novels in the 1930s. And Reeves had even indicated on his recent visit that the idea of a film based on the fantastic escapes and escapades of Doc Savage “had caught his fancy.” Therefore Denie appealed to Lurie’s readers for support:

MTI feels it is time Hercules became Doc Savage, and to launch his third and possibly most successful career and return to public life. We believe we can encourage this because Reeves is certainly willing, but we readers and bodybuilders must let the producer of the projected Doc Savage films know that Reeves is the only one who could play him. At the end of this article we shall give the producer’s address, so let’s all of us simply deluge him with letters! *MTI* is attempting through its own many channels to get national publicity for this important undertaking, but we need your support to make public feeling about Reeves’ popularity and talent known where it counts!

Denie was convinced that the voice and facial characteristics as well as the “square pectorals, wide shoulders, contoured head and mighty forearms” of Reeves were a perfect fit for the fictional hero’s casting.¹¹

The next two issues of *Muscle Training Illustrated* featured more hyperbole on the success of Lurie, “our impresario of the sport,” in attracting Reeves to New York, and a series of interviews by Denie. Despite the sensational title, “The Truth & the Greatness” for the latter, Reeves revealed nothing extraordinary about himself and little that was not already known. He revealed, for instance, how he was cast for *Hercules*, that he had made enough money to retire at forty-five, that his wife was gorgeous, and that he was a horse enthusiast—not exactly a riveting personal expose. Likewise, his revelation that he no longer lifted weights must have been disappointing to *Muscle Training Illustrated* readers. “Working with weights is a discipline,” he said, “and I would rather do the things that are fun rather than disciplinarian.” This statement hardly coincided with Denie’s remark that “after Steve had gone home we all realized he left behind in his wake a storm of new inspiration and hope for today’s bodybuilding world.” These were perhaps the kind of misconstructions that annoyed Reeves most, the tendency of writers to make something out of nothing. Desperate for an interesting story about Hercules, some of them perpetuated “the opposite of what really happened.” About fifty percent of what was published on him in the 1950s was wrong. Despite the best efforts of the iron game rumor mill, Reeves lived a pretty normal existence. Denie concluded by reiterating *Muscle Training Illustrated*’s pitch for readers to encourage the producer of Doc Savage, George Pal, to give the starring role to Reeves.¹²

In part two of the interview, Steve talked about his current conditioning training, how he had met Aline, his modest education, his facial hair, and other desultory topics. When asked if he had any bad habits, he could think of none. He was never a drinker, disliked smoking, had a sound diet, and “never had any serious health problem.” Were it not for the fact that he was Steve Reeves, these pedestrian details would have been boring. Steve did admit that he was interested in the Doc Savage role. “I think that would be a challenge to me as an actor and, of course, an adventure to play.”¹³ Indeed Lurie and Denie seemed to have reignited Reeves’ interest and confidence in reentering show business. He appeared

excited at the prospect. Unfortunately *Muscle Training Illustrated*, in the same issue, had to announce “to our deep regret” that ex-TV Tarzan, Ron Ely, not Steve, was chosen for the Doc Savage part.¹⁴ Obviously a younger man was preferred. Undaunted, the indefatigable Lurie announced that he was “trying hard to lure Steve into actually posing for a WBBG show. . . Ah, to see Reeves pose again!”¹⁵

That Steve, nearly 50, would remount the posing dais and invite comparisons of how he had looked a quarter century earlier seemed highly unlikely. Nevertheless Lurie continued to capitalize on Reeves’ enduring appeal monthly by republishing pictures and recollections of his 1973 visit. Then Lurie learned that Columbia Pictures was casting for a new film entitled *Sindbad at the World’s End* and looking for a star that closely fit Steve’s attributes. “Armed with this knowledge and Denie’s wild enthusiasm I contacted the Reeves’ who, being informed of this, politely gave their permission to act in their behalf to find out everything about the venture.” Dan next got in touch with the head of Columbia’s European affiliate, Charles Schneer. Although subsequent negotiations proved abortive, Lurie remained convinced of Reeves’ marketability. “Many have believed Steve was finished working in films for some reason.” But “this is untrue. When the ‘Hercules Man’ wants to return he can name his own price, his own vehicle, and do it his way. The question is when? The screen waits. . . .”¹⁶ In any case, it seemed to console Lurie that Steve had turned down several other parts and that “thousands of fans” were supposedly asking when he was going to reappear at a WBBG show. “Soon . . . we hope.”¹⁷

To facilitate such an arrangement and further tap the influence of other rich and famous personages for his movement, Lurie had devised the WBBG Hall of Fame. Formed in 1974, it had honored nine iron game notables—Bill Pearl, Peter Lupus, Bob Bednarski, Chris Dickerson, Joe Bonomo, Joe “Mighty Atom” Greenstein, Dave Draper, Johnny Weissmuller, and Buster Crabbe. For 1977, Lurie planned to induct five more—Mr. Universe Serge Nubret, wrestler Billy Graham, boxer Joe Louis, actor Sylvester Stallone, and Reeves—and to select new WBBG physique champions. Lurie took this opportunity (through his son Mark) to gloat over his accomplishments during the past decade in a *Muscle Training Illustrated* article entitled “Years of Conquest.” Each year WBBG successes were highlight-



In 1973 Steve Reeves came to New York City as Dan Lurie’s guest of honor at that year’s WBBG Pro Mr. America event. On that trip, he was interviewed by ABC’s Howard Cosell.

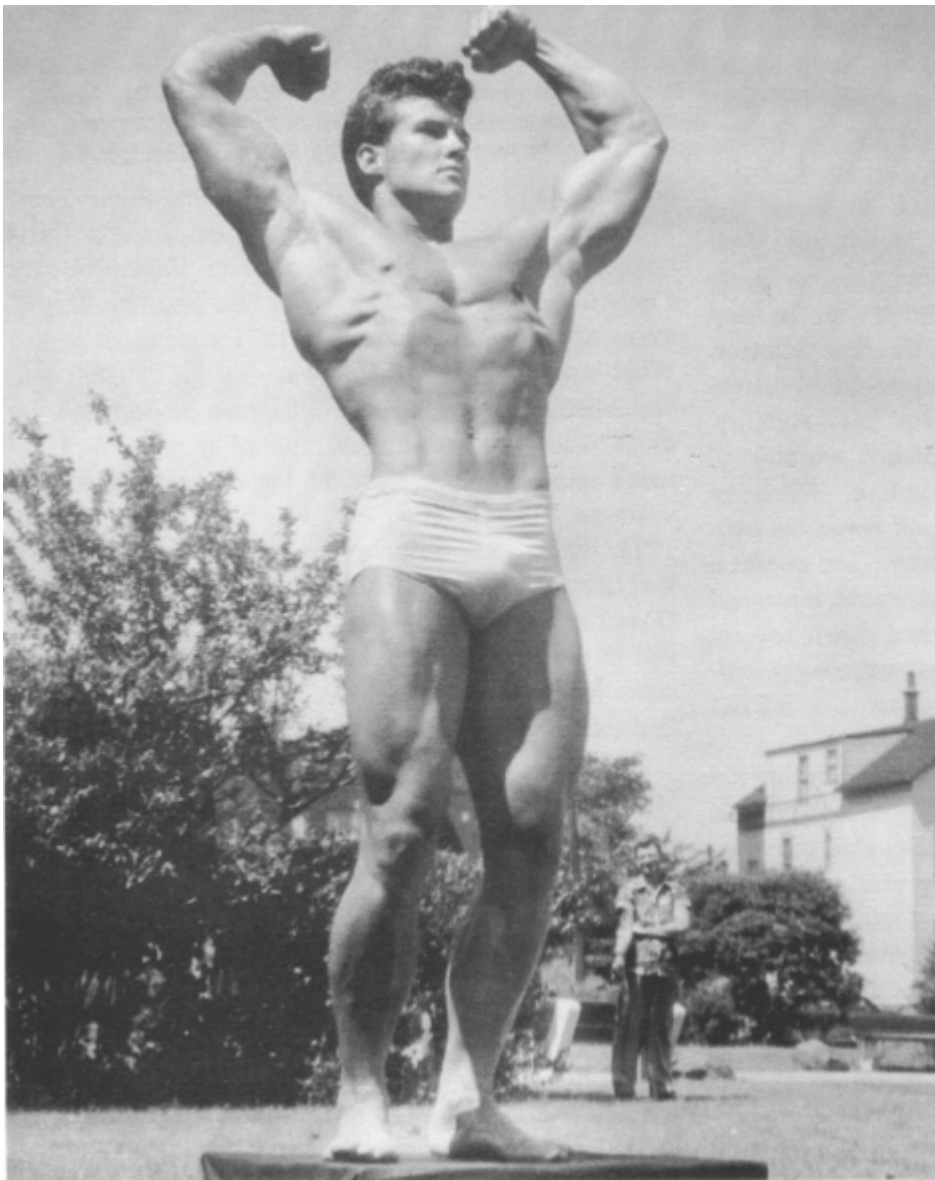
ed against a backdrop of events of national significance. Whether Harold Poole’s Pro-Mr. America victory was comparable to the Pueblo incident in 1968 or Boyer Coe’s winning the Pro-Mr. World title could be likened to the Mariner 9 space probe in 1971 were moot points. What was obvious to Mark was that the WBBG was “establishing a beachhead of its own importance for those who practice physical culture in times that try men’s minds.” But clearly the keystone event in these years of WBBG “conquest” was the Reeves visit in 1973, which took on an even greater significance and was likened to the Skylab docking mission of that year. “Dan Lurie accomplishes a docking mission of his own; that of reuniting the bodybuilding world with one of its super legends—Steve Reeves. Lurie accomplishes the impossible; he returns the retired Reeves to public life. . . and an audience nearly riots on the spot as they run on the stage to shake the hand of their most prominently recognized hero.”¹⁸ With all due allowance for exaggeration, Lurie was making a significant contribution to the iron game. What he did not realize was that he was doing more to revive and preserve its past than building a future power base for himself as a promoter.

At the 1977 “Hall of Fame” testimonial dinner at New York’s Statler Hilton, Reeves was the center of the show. Even before Reeves was introduced Graham, in accepting his own award, was carried away by the nostalgia of the moment and shocked the audience by stating

I’d rather be here with Steve Reeves today than with any man alive, even President Jimmy Carter, or King Hussein, or anybody in the

world. I mean there is no other man in bodybuilding—not Arnold Schwarzenegger, and my respects to Serge Nubret sitting here—but Steve Reeves started it all. Steve Reeves is God!

Steve and his wife were understandably embarrassed by this outburst of spontaneity and emotion. Indeed the formal tribute to Reeves by television personality Alan Burke paled by comparison, and Steve's response to the accolades he was receiving was humble and restrained—hardly befitting God! Still the audience was uplifted just to be in the presence of this legendary



One of the rarely seen Reeves' photos in our archives is this informal outdoor shot by Ken Ryan. Except that the model is the godlike Reeves, this looks like a family photo.

hero. Denie reported that:

as Steve tried to leave after signing autographs at the conclusion for the dinner, for over a half hour, it was found next to impossible to get him out of the room. When they would take him to one exit people would run after him and good-naturedly he would sign. Dan Lurie would break Steve away, move him up behind the banquet table toward the other exits, and 'whammo' . . . wall to wall people again. Steve was literally chased from one corner to the next with cameras, autograph pads, and handshakes. The most amazing spectacle this author has ever witnessed. Perhaps Billy Graham was right, at least from a bodybuilding standpoint. Thanks, Dan, for letting us dine with 'Hercules' and all the rest.¹⁹

Later Steve traveled to shows conducted by Nubret's World Amateur Bodybuilding Association in Paris and Madrid where he received further awards as "The World's Most Classic Physique" and "The World's Most Popular Bodybuilder." Lurie also took credit for these accolades inasmuch as it was he who had brought Reeves out of retirement. "Bodybuilders everywhere are indebted to Dan Lurie for his dedication to our sport, and his persuasiveness in bringing the great Steve Reeves into the spotlight again—thereby inspiring thousands more to follow the example he has set."²⁰ And when Steve was honored by the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports for his "Outstanding Contributions" at the annual awards dinner of the Downtown Athletic Club (DAC) in 1978, Lurie was there to share the limelight. Steve Reeves was now "The Man with the Power."²¹

By the early 1980s it was the DAC, home of the Heisman trophy, that was taking the lead in honoring physical culture greats at its September banquets. Rudy Riska, DAC Athletic Director and former pitcher for the New York Yankees, established the annual Steve Reeves Award in 1981 for the person who had made the greatest contribution to the nation's fitness. Jack LaLanne was the second recipient in 1982, and as the principals lined up for an official photograph, Lurie and his son Mark squeezed into the middle of the picture. Notwithstanding his brashness, organizers of the affair realized how much they owed to Lurie for popularizing fitness award galas and for rediscovering Reeves. According to 1962 Mr. America Joe Abbenda, who reported the festivities, Lurie looked "great" and received "a tremendous ovation" when introduced to the audience. "He tells me that he is back in heavy training every morning, I think he is secretly getting ready for the PLATFORM. 'Watch out' Uncle Joe, the Sealtest Muscle Man is coming back." Steve Reeves also "looked in magnificent shape," observed Abbenda, "and every bit of the superstar that he is." In his tribute to LaLanne, Reeves called him the "Godfather of Fitness" and, according to Abbenda, recalled how "Jack personally helped him in his teens when Steve used to go to the Jack LaLanne Spa in Oakland . . . Everyone there realized the unforgettable moments of having these men together. They both influenced the fitness field in their own ways. Steve brought it to the screen and Jack took it to your home."²²

During the remainder of the 1980s, Steve's connections with Lurie diminished and the honors bestowed upon him subsided somewhat, but his reputation as an iron game icon was secure. In great part through the untiring efforts of Lurie, this otherwise reclusive personality was rescued from obscurity. Unquestionably these endeavors were also part of a larger scheme of self-promotion to boost Lurie and his organization, enabling them to share in the recognition of this former box office idol. Sealtest Dan was a showman and to some extent an exhibitionist, and some of his initiatives did not always coincide with the good taste and refinement that so characterized Reeves in his later years. Reeves and Lurie were opposites, yet they provided strength and sustenance to each other at critical junctures in their respective lives.

What then was the appeal for Reeves, who had wealth, comfort, and happiness in two homes, to accept

Lurie's offers? In part, he probably felt a sense of nostalgia for his bodybuilding roots and a desire to repay his fans for their generosity over the years. He may also have had a little too much time on his hands. But there is a possible deeper motivation that enabled Lurie to carry out his rediscovery. A cue is provided in Robert Kennedy's 1982 article in *Muscle Training Illustrated* entitled "Is the Steve Reeves Physique Dead?" Kennedy contends that when Steve burst upon the bodybuilding scene in the 1940s he was regarded as the "perfect specimen" because of his "incredible physical proportions. . . No one could touch him for looks. He had definition, size and shape. He had broad shoulders, narrow hips and a waspish waist. Both his forearms and calves . . . were fully developed." In Reeves' heyday muscles had to fit the frame and look right on the person. After several decades of competitive bodybuilding, emphasis had changed from proportion to size (muscle stacking) and definition in the 1980s champion.

I suppose like the passing of time, it is both regrettable and incredible, especially for those of us who knew the Reeves' physique during the middle of this century, to realize that Steve Reeves could not even win a state title today. He would have difficulty qualifying to even enter the Mr. America contest and would certainly be left out of the biggies such as the Mr. Universe or the Olympia.²³

Although Kennedy barely mentions it, steroids and the ubiquitous drug culture undoubtedly were the most potent factors in this transformation of physiques in the 1960s and 1970s. These innovations, accompanied by seismic changes in American society during the Vietnam War era, influenced not only the way that Reeves' physique was assessed but how he was perceived and received as an actor by the general public. He was no longer a desired commodity at the box office not because he was a few years older or any less talented but because society had changed. The new realism of the 1970s, featuring gratuitous sex, foul language, drugs, vulgarity, and violence, flew directly against the values of the high-minded, clean-living Reeves. Steve personified qualities that were redolent of an earlier era. when America was captivated by onscreen images of the likes of Mario Lanza, Esther Williams, Tab Hunter, and the Nelson family. Reeves had epitomized the image of the perfect man and, perhaps more than any other major figure, represented the opposite of what bodybuilding and the motion picture industry was moving towards.

For Steve, however, the ego investment in both of his careers over the previous three decades had been great, and it could not have been easy for him to adapt to this departure from his value system. It is hardly surprising that he sought escape to his Alps retreat and west coast ranches. It was not the first time he had experienced untoward circumstances, and he had developed considerable coping skills. "My philosophy of life is one of adaptation," he told his latest biographer, "to be able to function regardless of your means in life." Chris LeClaire concluded that "in later years, facing disappointments in his bodybuilding career and challenges in Hollywood, these beliefs, formed in childhood, would sustain him."²⁴ It was fortuitous that in the mid-life crisis Steve encountered in the early 1970s he received succor from an unexpected quarter. In his autobiography, Reeves credits Lurie with the first two of the nineteen bodybuilding awards he received after retirement. Although he never returned to the posing platform or played Doc Savage, Hercules was rescued by Sealtest Dan from lapsing into comfortable seclusion. Ironically Lurie's organization and magazine ran their course by the mid-1990s and Lurie himself faded into obscurity.

But he left a lasting legacy. Lurie's recognition of Reeves in 1973 proved to be the catalyst for a series of Hall of Fame type events that occurred in succeeding years and decades. As Lurie had done, the Downtown Athletic Club eventually abandoned its annual awards banquets. In the meantime, a new tradition of honoring physical culture greats was instigated by Vic Boff and his Association of Oldtime Barbell & Strongmen in the 1980s. Although Vic is quick to point out that his organization's annual reunion/dinners developed out of annual birthday celebrations for Siegmund Klein, they reveal a striking similarity to those conducted a decade earlier by Lurie and the DAC, both of which were attended by Boff.²⁵ In 1988 the Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen Association honored Steve Reeves as "one of the most popular physique champions of all time."²⁶ Boff's organization perpetuates the spirit of Steve Reeves that inspired the relatively recent tradition of paying formal tribute to iron game heroes. Long may it "carry on"!

Notes

1. The foremost sources on Reeves' life are his own *Building the Classic Physique the Natural Way* (Calabasas, California, 1995), and Chris LeClaire's, *Worlds to Conquer: Steve Reeves* (South Chatham, Massachusetts, 1999). Also see Milton T. Moore's *Steve Reeves: A Tribute* (privately printed, 1989).

2. By 1980 Lurie claimed 25,000 members on his WBBG roster. "Dan Lurie: The Champion Maker," *Muscle Training Illustrated* (Summer, 1980), 6.

3. "A Hercules for Another Time," *Chicago Tribune*, May 12, 2000. For other obituary accounts see Rick Lyman, "Steve Reeves, 74, Whose 'Hercules' Began a Genre," *New York Times*, May 5, 2000, and Gene Mosee, "Steve Reeves Ascends from Legendary Superstar to Bodybuilding Immortality," *Iron Man*, 59 (August, 2000), 174-176, 178, 181-182 and 184.

4. Earle Liederman, "The Magnificent Steve Reeves," *MTI*, 3 (March, 1967), 27.

5. "Muscle Happenings," *ibid.*, 16 (October, 1968) 12.

6. Dick Falcon, "Jim Haislop: The Greatest Mr. America Since Steve Reeves," *ibid.*, 22 (December, 1969), 29.

7. Robert Kennedy, "Steve Reeves, He Knew What He Wanted . . . And Got It!" *ibid.*, 24 (December, 1970), 60.

8. Milton T. Moore, Jr., "Milestones in the Life of Steve Reeves," *ibid.*, 28 (August, 1971), 26-27, and *ibid.*, 32 (April/May, 1972), 33-35.

9. Denie, "Steve Reeves is Alive and Well," *ibid.*, 33 (July, 1972), 58-59.

10. Nat Haber, "A Dream Fulfilled," *ibid.*, 41 (January, 1974), 5 and 61.

11. Denie, "Steve Reeves is Doc Savage!" *ibid.*, 22-23.

12. Denie, "Reeves: The Truth & the Greatness," *ibid.*, 42 (March, 1974) 22.

13. Denie, "Reeves: Part 2," *ibid.*, 43 (May, 1974) 19 and 66.

14. "Star Talk," *ibid.*, 9.

15. Dan Lurie, "How to Get Calves Like Steve Reeves," *ibid.*, 41.

16. Dan Lurie, "Jones, Reeves, Ferrigno . . . and *Sports Illustrated*," *ibid.*, 48 (May, 1975), 62.

17. "Star Talk," *ibid.*, 49 (July, 1975), 9.

18. Mark [Lurie], "WBBG: Years of Conquest," *ibid.*, 62 (September, 1977), 11, 57-59.

19. Denie, "Dynamite Within These Walls," *ibid.*, 65 (March, 1978), 17, 57, 59 and 62.

20. "Star Talk," *ibid.*, 67 (June, 1978), 6.

21. Denie, "The Man with the Power," *ibid.*, 69 (August, 1978), 12-13, and "Part II," *ibid.*, 70 (October, 1978), 8.

22. Joe Abbenda, "Jack LaLanne—Godfather of Fitness," *ibid.*, 103 (December, 1982), 18 and 60. Later, however, Reeves explained that during his early days in Oakland, he chose to work out at Ed Yaricks gym, rather than LaLanne's, because it was much closer to his home. LeClaire, *Worlds to Conquer*, p. 37.

23. Robert Kennedy, "Is the Steve Reeves Physique Dead?" *MTI*, 100 (August, 1982), 7-8.

24. LeClaire, *Worlds to Conquer*, p. 24.

25. Interview with Vic Boff, Coral Gables, Florida, August 8, 2000.

26. AOBs Membership Letter, August 18, 1988, in author's possession.