

Whippoorwill E-Comment

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TARZAN REDUX

Living in pleasant semi-reclusive retirement out here in the wilds of the Bluegrass Region of Kentucky, our sole entertainment is viewing Netflix movies. We are on a four-disks-at-a-time plan and try to watch a movie each evening. Netflix offers over 100,000 titles, and as soon as new movies are released to disk, they are quickly made available. We enjoy old movies, many we remember seeing when we were children. Some are not as good as we remembered - our tastes have evolved - but some are better.

Recently we decided we wanted to see again some of the early Tarzan movies that held us spellbound at Saturday afternoon matinées in the late 1930's and early- to mid-1940's. Movies are such marvelous time machines. They freeze time and place like no other human experience. Johnny Weissmuller and Maureen O'Sullivan were in their early twenties again - fresh, lithe, and beautiful. We found the stereotypical plots to be still interesting and held our attention, though they were quite predictable.

Jane's relatives and friends from England show up in the deep African jungles unexpectedly, seeking her, accompanied by untrustworthy, unscrupulous guides seeking to exploit Africa's ivory, gold, diamonds, or animals. Tarzan is adroitly maneuvered out of the way but gaudily painted natives, including vicious pigmys, capture Jane and friends and take them to a walled village where they are systematically tortured and killed. But Cheeta, the chimp, comes to the rescue and runs to find and inform Tarzan of their perfidy, who enlists

entire herds of elephants who stomp the native village and villagers flat. The visitors leave for England again and Tarzan and Jane resume their improbable idyllic lives.



In *Tarzan Finds a Son*, Johnny Sheffield is introduced as a cherubic adopted son, who plays in three Tarzan movies. Libby and I wondered if he was still alive, and I did some Internet research to discover, yes, he was. He is currently 76 years old, and looks like this:



Would you recognize yourself if you saw yourself at age 9 compared with your appearance today? We're still Tarzan fans.

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