

= Nick Stuart =

Nick Stuart ( April 10 , 1904 - April 7 , 1973 ) was an Austro -@- Hungarian @-@ born American actor and bandleader . His career spanned five decades , during which he appeared in over 50 films , more than half of them features , as well as film shorts , serials , and even one television appearance . He rose to stardom in such films as Girls Gone Wild and Chasing Through Europe , prior to expanding his business interests by creating a talent agency , and a popular upscale club in Hollywood .

After being introduced to music by Guy Lombardo , he established his own band , " The Man with the Band from Movieland " , which played for over twenty years . When he dissolved the band in 1961 , he opened a haberdashery in Biloxi , Mississippi . He met his first wife , Sue Carol , while working on a film , and the two had a daughter , actress Carol Lee Ladd . While his first marriage was short @-@ lived , his second marriage to Martha Burnett lasted over thirty years , until his death from cancer in 1973 .

= = Early life and family = =

Stuart was born Niculae Pratz on April 10 , 1904 , in Abrud ( Abrudbánya ) , Transylvania , then part of Austria @-@ Hungary . He immigrated to the United States as a child in 1913 , growing up in Dayton , Ohio .

Stuart was married twice . The first time was to Sue Carol on November 28 , 1929 ; the two had a child , actress Carol Lee Ladd ( born July 18 , 1932 ) . The " Lee " in Carol Lee was named for Carol 's best friend , Dixie Lee , the wife of Bing Crosby . Initially , the couple attempted to hide their marriage from the public , with the help of the Crosbys . Stuart would make public appearances with Dixie Lee , while Bing Crosby would feign romantic interest with Sue Carol in public . While on a personal appearances tour in 1931 , the couple had \$ 35 @,@ 000 of jewelry stolen . The jewelry was taken from their parked car on Michigan Avenue in Chicago .

Less than a year after the birth of their child , reports began to circulate that their marriage was in trouble . By August 1933 Stuart and Carol were estranged and living separate lives , and divorced in 1934 . After the divorce , Stuart was romantically linked with several other women , including nightclub singer Bobbe Arnst ( recently divorced from Johnny Weissmuller ) , and Dorothy Lee .

= = Career = =

= = = Film = = =

In the mid @-@ 1920s Nick Prata ( as he was then known ) began working in the film industry , doing odd jobs around the set for Fox Film , such as prop boy , script clerk , and assistant cameraman . While working as an assistant on Raoul Walsh 's What Price Glory ? in 1926 , Prata was given a screen test , after which his name was changed to Nick Stuart . Shortly after , he became Howard Hawks 's personal assistant . He appeared in minor roles in two film shorts , before being given an opportunity to act in a featured role by Hawks , in 1927 's , The Cradle Snatchers . After the success of The Cradle Snatchers , Stuart would star in several shorts , many of which again paired him with his Snatchers co @-@ star , Sally Phipps , which included Gentlemen Prefer Scotch , and Cupid and the Clock ( based on a short story by O. Henry ) . The two would star in Stuart 's next three films in 1927 and 1928 : High School Hero , Why Sailors Go Wrong , and News Parade . Stuart 's next role was that of Sandy , starring alongside Victor McLaglen in William K. Howard 's The River Pirate in 1928 . Stuart and Sue Carol had been linked together romantically since early in 1928 , and would co @-@ star in Stuart 's next project , Girls Gone Wild .

Stuart and Phipps appeared together in his next film , although Phipps was in a secondary role . Stuart 's co @-@ star in 1929 's Joy Street , was Lois Moran , who had also been his love interest in The River Pirate . Stuart and Phipps were again slated to co @-@ star in Chasing Through Europe ,

the sequel to their successful film , News Parade . However , she was replaced by June Collyer in July 1928 , who was replaced in turn by Sue Carol in September . Stuart and Carol appeared in several films together over the next few years , including 1933 's Secret Sinners .

= = = Agency days = = =

In 1933 Stuart , along with David Kay , opened an agency in Hollywood , which represented actors , writers , and directors . Later that year , their company signed an agreement with the Canadian film company , British Commonwealth Productions , to cast all of their films . The first film they cast was The Crimson West ( released in the United States as Fighting Playboy ) , which would be the first full @-@ length talking film produced in Canada . The following year , he became the founder of the Bath and Tennis Club in Hollywood . The club was modeled on upscale clubs in the east , particularly those in Palm Beach and Long Island , New York , and included recreational facilities for tennis , squash , swimming , badminton , and handball .

= = = Entrance into music and later acting career = = =

In the midst of his film career , after Guy Lombardo got him interested in music , Stuart began his own big band , and became known as " The Man with the Band from Movieland " . Stuart had become friendly with Lombardo when he and his wife , Carol , had helped Lombardo 's brother adopt a child in 1932 . By 1937 , Stuart 's band had achieved a modicum of fame , and had appeared in several film shorts , including 1938 's Twenty Girls and a Band . After the creation of his band , Stuart would only sporadically appear in films over the next 20 years . In the 1940s , he appeared in two of the Bowery Boys films , starring Leo Gorcey and Huntz Hall , Mr. Muggs Steps Out ( 1943 ) , and Pride of the Bowery ( 1946 ) . Stuart 's last starring role would be in the 1946 film , Gunsmoke .

From 1946 through 1963 Stuart would appear in only four more films , although he appeared in several film serials , such as The Lost Planet ( 1953 ) , Blackhawk : Fearless Champion of Freedom ( 1952 ) , and King of the Congo ( 1952 ) . Stuart 's one and only television appearance came in a featured role in the final episode of Navy Log , which aired on September 11 , 1958 . In the 1960s , he would make his final appearance in a small role in Sydney Pollack 's drama This Property Is Condemned , starring Natalie Wood , Robert Redford , and Charles Bronson .

= = Later life and death = =

Stuart married Martha Burnett in 1942 , with whom he remained married until his death in 1973 . Stuart dissolved his band in 1961 , after which he opened a haberdashery in Biloxi , Mississippi , located in the Broadwater Beach Hotel . Stuart died from cancer on April 7 , 1973 in Biloxi , Mississippi . He was buried in Southern Memorial Park in Biloxi , where his wife would be buried next to him upon her death in 1991 .

= = Filmography = =

( Per AFI database , and imdb.com. Feature films except as noted . )