

Hollywood Unscripted Ep 008 – Mark Bailey

Announcer: From Curtco Media, there's no place like Hollywood.

Scott Tallal: Welcome to Hollywood UNSCRIPTED. I'm your host, Scott Tallal of the Malibu Film Society. It's our New Year's Eve episode. And for that we have a very special guest. He's produced and written more than a dozen feature length documentaries which have collectively won one primetime Emmy and been nominated for four others plus one Academy Award. He's also written three books, one of which seems like the ideal selection to talk about on New Year's Eve. Of All the Gin Joints: Stumbling through Hollywood History. Mark Bailey, welcome to Hollywood UNSCRIPTED.

Mark Bailey: Thanks, Scott. Thanks for having me.

Scott Tallal: Let's talk about the book. What inspired you to write Of All the Gin Joints?

Mark Bailey: This is sort of a follow up to an initial book, which was a book about hard drinking writers. And that I did as I did this with my partner, Ed Hemingway, who's an illustrator.

Scott Tallal: And the name is not a coincidence. He is the youngest grandson of Ernest Hemingway.

Mark Bailey: Yeah, he is. I think that the first idea for the book came from him and was born out of that sort of family circumstance. He had this idea about his grandfather and writing about well-known, highly regarded, hard drinking writers. It was called Hemingway and Bailey's Bartending Guide to Great American Writers. It was a great book to work on. It had a lot of cocktail recipes and they were sort of from the classic era. And these writers were Eugene O'Neill and William Faulkner and F. Scott Fitzgerald. And the stories were wild. And you were sort of cast back to a different era where there was a different social norm and a different code of behavior. And we tend to look back and think that the past was somehow more innocent or pure. But it was really anything but that. And so then that book came out and it did pretty well. And we were looking to follow up with another book and we thought, well, you know, how about

Hollywood? And it happened that after we sold that book, I moved out here and wrote the book out here and he illustrated it back in New York. And we sort of worked together across the country. So that was how the book came to be.

Scott Tallal: And it follows the same format. I mean, it's a delightful mix of these incredible stories and cocktail recipes.

Mark Bailey: The first book was a little bit more of a bartending guide. In this the subtitle is *Stumbling Through Hollywood History*. And I like to think of it as sort of social film history through the bottom of a whiskey glass.

Scott Tallal: That's a great description. And it really seems like that the writing is tremendous. I absolutely love your storytelling.

Mark Bailey: Oh, thank you.

Scott Tallal: We'll come back to the questions in a minute, but can you share one of the stories with us?

Mark Bailey: Sure. I think that I'll kick it off with a story about Humphrey Bogart, since it's the Humphrey Bogart line that is the title of the book *Of All the Gin Joints*. And the way the book is designed is built around anecdotes about different stars. So this is about Humphrey Bogart. And it always leads off with a quote. The Bogart quote is *The Whole World is about three drinks behind me*. The other Bogart quote that I really like and it was a bit of a toss up where Bogart's last words, which were supposedly I should never have switched from scotch to martinis. If you're thinking of doing that, this New Year's, I don't know, Bogart would, I guess, argue otherwise. So here's a story about Humphrey Bogart.

Mark Bailey: It wasn't a joke, but it damn well should have been. Certainly it began like one. So Humphrey Bogart walks into a bar with two stuffed pandas. Bogart was by then and this is September 1949, the biggest movie star in the world. And he was out in New York with an old drinking buddy named Bill Seaman. They'd been carousing since early. The two of them and Bogey's wife, Lauren Bacall. But she'd gone back to the hotel hours ago. After Mrs. Bogart left the men found themselves in need of a stand-in that

might scare off would be home wreckers and drunks. Somehow it emerged that a nearby delicatessen sold a historically random non-food item as delicatessens have a way of doing, stuffed pandas. Not just any stuffed pandas, mind you. Each of these weighed in at more than 20 pounds and set you back 25 bucks a pop. Perfect. Bogart and Seeman bought a couple of pandas and hopped a cab to El Morocco where they requested a table for four. Two seats for them, two for their dates. They were seated and that was supposed to be the end of it, getting seated with two pandas.

Unfortunately for Bogart, the real end would take four days to arrive and it wouldn't be over drinks with his friends. He'd be in court. Here's the thing. Bogart was a gregarious man with a keen sense of humor, but he was only comfortable among friends, and his social circle was tight knit. The Rat Pack later so closely associated with Frank Sinatra was in fact Bogart's creation with Bogart at the center. The mission of the group, Bogart said, was, quote, the relief of boredom in the perpetuation of independence. Bacall was a member, of course. So was Sinatra, Judy Garland, Spencer Tracy, Talent Agent, Irving Lázár, they were all a part of the original Rat Pack. You might see them out at Romanoff's or on rare occasions in Las Vegas drinking and carrying on. But if you weren't part of the pack, you were an outsider and you weren't welcome. Which brings us back to the pandas. If you were to spy Bogart at a nightclub in the wee hours of the morning, propping up an oversized stuffed animal, you might think that it was a not so subtle message about the company he preferred to keep. And if you knew anything about Bogart, which you might, since he was more or less the biggest star in the world, you wouldn't consider yourself in on the joke. But a young model named Robin Roberts thought she was special, as young models often do. She approached Bogart's table on her way out, laughed and picked up one of the pandas. And Bogart, given the number of drinks he had put away by this point happened to be feeling very protective of this panda. So he naturally pulled the panda close to him and told Miss Roberts to leave him alone, for he was a married man. And then the woman fell over. She said he shoved her. He said she lost her balance. Four days later, he was in a Manhattan courtroom facing legal action. The panda fiasco immediately hit the tabloids with Bogart protesting his innocence every step of the way. One reporter asked him if he'd struck Miss Roberts. He said he would never hit a woman. They're too dangerous. Another reporter asked if he was drunk at the time of the incident. He replied, Isn't everyone at 4 a.m.? Fortunately for Bogart, the judge presiding over the case found it as ridiculous as he did, throwing it out after the first hearing. It turns out being left alone when you're the biggest star in the world requires a lot of people.

Scott Tallal: That's great. I remember doing research on Humphrey Bogart when we were celebrating the seventy fifth anniversary of Casablanca, which is a remarkable film, and so far as almost none of the people who made it were originally scheduled to make it. They were all brought in after changes and they started shooting before the end of the movie had been written.

Mark Bailey: Oh right.

Scott Tallal: Do you know who Humphrey Bogart was in real life and what his background was? He was a preppy or a prep school kid. His dad was the most prominent obstetrician gynecologist in New York. His mother illustrated children's books and had studied under Whistler.

Mark Bailey: It is interesting that in a certain way, not surprising because Bogart, as I understand it, at least the studios were sort of looking for his persona for a while before he became the Bogart that we know of Casablanca or The Maltese Falcon or you know, the hard-boiled Bogart. He played villains. He played sort of altogether different types. And then he kind of got traction with the hard edge.

Scott Tallal: Right.

Mark Bailey: But that didn't necessarily speak to who he was. And this is one of the things I think in this book and when you look at earlier actors like John Gilbert and later actors maybe like Dennis Hopper, let's say, or you know, where the roles or the persona bleeds into real life. The presumption off screen is that you're much like the type that you play on screen and you begin to live it a bit more.

Scott Tallal: Right.

Mark Bailey: So if you're wild and out there and edgy onscreen, you take that into your personal life and you kind of see that happening a lot with different actors. The other part is there are guys like Lee Marvin, who is a big World War 2 hero and, you know, stormed over 20 beachheads. Seems like he genuinely was a stone cold bad ass. And

that is who he played, right? Mitchum was a kid in the Depression, riding the rails at age 14 on his own. I mean Mitchum was a hard, tough guy, and that is who he play.

Scott Tallal: It's just the remarkable to me that the onscreen Bogart was 180 degrees from who he started out as off-screen.

Mark Bailey: I have a funny when I could read you. I mean, just since you're talking about Casablanca and Casablanca, it seems crazy that you say that, particularly that they were in production before the script was done because it seems like such a tight film. And when you wonder how these giant, hugely financed movies go pear shaped and who let that happen? I often think it's sort of is the rush into production and you're trying to accommodate actors schedules and you have them and you have to go, go, go. And the script isn't ready and then it comes out muddled. But let me read you one. And this is a Beat the Devil, which is a 1953 John Houston film that he did with Bogart. And one of the things that the book has is we also talk about a number of different film sets that were particularly wild or dysfunctional. And this one taps into some of that and has some fun folks.

Mark Bailey: John Houston's Beat the Devil was a total disaster almost from the start. Maybe a total disaster is a little strong since by some miracle nobody actually ended up dead. The film directed by Houston and featuring Humphrey Bogart, Jennifer Jones, Peter Laurie and Gina Lola Brigida was to be shot largely on location in a little town called Ravello in Italy, a picturesque mountain village that's high up on the Amalfi Coast. There were some early warning signs. First, the sexy Italian actress Lola Brigida had never been in an English speaking film before. This most likely was because she could barely speak English, like none almost. Second, travelling into Ravello, the Italian chauffeur driving Houston and Bogart got into a car accident. John Houston was fine, but Bogart was pitch forward, cracking some teeth and badly gouging his tongue. So even before shooting commenced, the female lead couldn't speak English and the male lead couldn't speak at all. And third, to complicate things even further, neither Lola Brigida nor Bogart nor the rest of the cast had yet to see any of their lines. The reason being that Houston had thrown a party the weekend before the start of principal photography, during which he tore up the entire script. It was a tearing up the script party. Apparently the original draft had run into trouble with the motion picture production code and nobody liked it very much anyways. Houston decided to fly novelist

Truman Capote over to Italy to write the new script on a day to day basis as they shot. Capote would work through the night and pages would be handed out to the cast in the morning. Lola Brigida would learn her lines phonetically. Bogart, until his mouth healed, would mime his lines, which would later be dubbed. Conceivably, it could have worked, have had only the cast and crew not decided to embark on a bender of legendary proportions. Capote or Capozzi, as Bogart had begun to finally call him, soon began to feel that Bogarde and Houston were trying to kill him with their dissipation. He described everyone as half drunk all day and dead drunk all night, noting that once, believe it or not, I came around at 6:00 in the morning to find King Farouk doing the hula hula in the middle of Bogart's bedroom. It seemed Houston had not created a very productive work environment. In Yiddish folktales, the Russian city of Helm is depicted as a city of fools. Jennifer Jones character in Beat the Devil was named Mrs. Gwendolyn Helm, an insider's wink, some believe, at what the production had become. Certainly Houston seemed self-aware. In an interview years later, he would say it was a bit of a travesty. We were making fun of ourselves. Some critics would see the picture as one of the first examples of camp, arguing that Houston and Bogart were hell bent on parroting the noir classics The Maltese Falcon, Key Largo like that. These were classics that they themselves had crafted, but that didn't mean that the mayhem wasn't real. Both Houston and Capote tell a story about Bogart arm wrestling, all comers in the lobby of the Hotel Polumbo. He even challenged little Caposi wavering five dollars. Astonishingly, Capote upped it to \$50 and then actually beat Bogart rather effortlessly, pushing his arm flat. Everyone was wide eyed. I'd like to see you do that just one more time, Bogart said, double or nothing, but again, Capote pushed his arm down. Then once more, Bogart losing a total of \$150 dollars, not having it. Bogart started to wrestle around with the writer, whom Houston now considered a little bulldog of a man. And here again, Capote somehow managed to trip Bogart, flipping the hard-boiled screen legend onto his ass and in the process, hurting Bogart's elbow so badly that they had to stop production for three days. Houston, we have a problem. To borrow a phrase from the production cinematographer, Oswald Morris. In fact, Morris himself tells another story of being sent to fetch Houston early one morning, only to get a strong whiff of smoke as he approached Houston's room. It seemed the bottom half of the bedroom door from the doorknob to the floor was red hot ash. The door was cracked open enough for Morris to slip inside where he found the director crashed out on the bed. Empty bottles of Jack Daniels, a couple of Sudi ashtrays and script pages littering the floor, apparently an electric room heater had been pushed too close to the door and

was about to set the room ablaze. Morris reached out and shook Houston's shoulder. John, it's Ozzie. Muffled How's the boy? John? Your bedroom door is alight. silence. Then again, John, your bedroom door is alight and then only. Oh, how I love the smell of burning wood. As Houston rolled over and went back to sleep. But in the end, the film was finished and nobody had died. Bogart would go on to *The Caine Mutiny* and Houston would spend another 30 years directing films. *Beat the Devil*, however, would be both a commercial and a critical flop. But then over time, that, too, would change, and it is now considered something of a cult classic. As for those lines of Bogart, the ones to later be dubbed. This was done during post-production at England's Shepardin studio. A young British actor was hired to provide Bogart's voice, a remarkable mimic. His name, Peter Sellers. At last, a professional comedian had come on board.

Scott Tallal: Well, you know, one of the things that struck me is that some of the stories are just flat out funny and others looking through them through the lens of today, they're kind of sad. Yeah, I agree. Talk to me about the research because almost all of these are stories I'd never heard.

Mark Bailey: It was an enormous amount of research. One thing that we decided early on and we had done this, this is Ed Hemingway and I in our earlier book, is we weren't going to write about anybody who is living. We sort of had two rules. We weren't going to write about anybody who is living and we were going to generally stick to people who sort of were known to be hard drinkers, that it was part of their public figure. We weren't sort of outing somebody who was a closet drinker and wasn't known for that. So probably the richest sources were memoir in autobiography because those were sort of first person accounts. I mean, like in the story I read about *Beat the Devil*, Oswald Morris did write his own autobiography called *Houston We Have a Problem*. And he tells lots of firsthand stories as Houston cinematographers. And that was great. You know, so those first person accounts were really useful. There's a lot in magazines and newspapers of the time. These were very public figures. So, for example, with Bogart in the *Panda* fiasco and the lines that he was quoted as saying in the courtroom, those were covered in the press, but it was a significant undertaking. And we did create a bibliography at the back of the book because after we'd done so much research, we thought we should really list it out there so other folks can dive in. But we did find two sources for everything. So there wasn't anything that we relied on a single source for.

Scott Tallal: How long did this take?

Mark Bailey: It took a few years. We bit off more than we could chew, Scott. Ed was illustrating other books and he writes children's books and I make documentary films. So across this four years I was making films and writing other things.

Scott Tallal: There was so much research that went into this. I don't know how you found time to do anything else.

Mark Bailey: Yeah, well, we had help with that too. You get researchers and sometimes they pull stuff in and they do a first pass at it. And, you know, we're looking for very specific parts of someone's life. The other thing that is really helpful that came about and this was kind of a difference, I think, between our first book on writers and our second book on Hollywood, which were probably five or six years apart, was being able to get books on Kindle, because then you can word search. And that actually allows you to move through books much more easily and isolate parts that might involve the social life during.

Scott Tallal: The breadth of the work is extraordinary. I mean, you go all the way back to the very beginnings of Hollywood in the silent era.

Mark Bailey: Yeah, it goes from the silent era in the early days, the Buster Keaton's and Mabel Norman's and John Gilberts and Marion Davies to all of those folks all the way through the 70s and people like Sinatra and Mitchem, and Ava Gardner and Lee Marvin. So it's a big stretch. This is a story about Lee Marvin. He's certainly sounds in his quote, quite tough. He says tequila straight. There's a real polite drink. You keep drinking until you finally take one more. And it just won't go down. Then, you know, you've reached your limit.

Mark Bailey: Just start driving. He'll come down. At least that was the logic. Director John Boorman and his wife Crystal had just finished dinner with Lee Marvin at Jack's at the beach in Santa Monica. Well, that's not entirely true. It had started as a dinner, but the hour was now 2:00 a.m. and Marvin was ripped on martinis. They'd all arrived together in Marvin's car, which he now insisted on driving. Even though Boorman was trying to take away his keys. Fuck you, Marvin had said, rearing back, gesturing with an

imaginary samurai sword. This was a man who had made 21 beach landings in the South Pacific during World War 2. Still, the imaginary sword didn't prevent anyone from getting into the car. And so Marvin persisted. He felt he was completely capable of driving and to demonstrate this. He climbed up onto the top of the vehicle like an orangutan, and crouched on the luggage rack. Pity poor John Boorman, the British filmmaker who is directing his first American feature Point Blank with Marvin as the lead. Boorman was as yet untested. He was also rewriting the script on the fly since Marvin had thrown the original shooting draft out the window. Locations were being scouted, sets were being designed, and still no one knew exactly what they were filming. Boorman would regularly meet with Marvin at his Malibu beach house to apprise him of his progress. The meetings typically went well unless Marvin had too much to drink. Beyond a certain level of vodka, Boorman would write, he sailed out on his own into deeper waters where no mortal could follow. Indeed, when drunk Marvin left everyone behind, often even himself. One morning he arrived home from an all nighter without his house keys after ringing the bell. He was greeted at the door by an unfamiliar woman. When he asked what she was doing in his house, she replied. You sold it to me three months ago. He had to buy a star map to figure out where he currently lived. Prior to Point Blank, Marvin had been in Vegas for production of The Professionals. One night, returning to his hotel after a long day shooting in Death Valley, he'd put quarter after quarter into a slot machine he couldn't get to work, not realizing it was actually a parking meter. Anyway, the luggage rack Marvin's car was parked at the end of the Santa Monica Pier jutting into the ocean. Boorman figured if he drove the length of a pier, he could demonstrate he was serious about this and Marvin would relent. So he gave it a shot to no avail. Before reaching the actual road, Boorman got out and asked Marvin if he was ready to come down. Marvin snarled. Boorman got back behind the wheel. It was late. The Pacific Coast Highway was practically deserted. Marvin had left him no choice. Boorman turned onto the highway and slowly headed toward Marvin's Beach House. It wasn't long before rolling lights appeared in the rearview mirror. The police. Boorman pulled over. An officer approached the car, assessing the scene. Finally, he looked at Boorman and asked his first question. Do you know you have Lee Marvin on your roof? I mean, I'm sure he was a nice guy at parties.

Promo -WLIL: Hi, this is Chris and Jenny from When Last I Left. We were just talking about how the holidays are over and we're a little bit, bummed. But you know what? I think we can keep the holidays going. How? By buying gifts for ourselves. OK. I like

where you're thinking. If you go to [Vicesreserve.com](https://vicesreserve.com) and you use the code [podcastVIP](https://vicesreserve.com), you get 15 percent off everything in the store. So it's like Vices's is still giving us Christmas presents. That's amazing. [PodcastVIP. Vicesreserve.com](https://vicesreserve.com). Fifteen percent off everything. What are we waiting for? Well, let's go. Let's go. [Vicesreserve.com](https://vicesreserve.com). I'm going. I'm going.

Scott Tallal: You talk about how things like the emergence of sound changed how Hollywood partied.

Mark Bailey: For one thing, the emergence of sound hit because you couldn't go out all night and get hammered and wake up after having had a pack and a half of cigarettes with your voice rough and scratchy and feel like you could get away with your scenes for the day. In the silent area, you could do that, but your voice was more your instrument with talkies. So in some ways it settled things. Some of that probably also has to do with the industry taking off in the media around you. And you know, in those early days it really was more the Wild West and you could fly under the radar a bit more, maybe. One of the things that is interesting is the studio system in the 30s and 40s and 50s had like their own team to handle stars who they knew were likely to fly off the rails at a given moment. And so they had relationships with the chief of police and they had relationships with the editors at the newspapers. They had relationships with the bar's owners or bartenders surrounding the studio. And they would get calls so that they could sort of swoop in and grab, you know, Clark Gable from a car wreck before the newsmen got there, before it hit the papers. So that idea of having your own celebrity handlers wranglers is kind of an interesting.

Scott Tallal: Yeah. But even in the early days of the talkies, there's still legendary stories, legendary parties. This goes back to like Tallulah Bankhead and those.

Mark Bailey: Yes. Yeah. There's some I mean, Bankhead and in some ways and she's a good example of somebody who is kind of famous for being Tallulah Bankhead. And she described herself always like as pure as driven slush.

Scott Tallal: Talk about her parties because those were.

Mark Bailey: Oh yeah. You read about these folks and they just seem so giant, painted with such thick, bright strokes in terms of their personalities and their behavior and their reputations. But Tallulah Bankhead, who came from an upper crust Alabama family, by the way. So there is that, as you pointed out, with Bogart and her father was the former speaker of the House. Actually, by the quote that begins, Tallulah Bankhead is my father warned me about men and alcohol, but he never said anything about women and cocaine.

Mark Bailey: Probably the best part she ever played was herself. Sure, Tallulah Bankhead occasionally received good notices for her stage and screen performances, but her fame rested almost entirely on the strength of her off-screen self, a hard drinking, libidinous force of nature. It's likely even her peers could only tell you a handful of the 20 film roles that she played. But her alcohol and cocaine fueled affairs were legendary. There was the time she threw a dinner party at her estate, which was called Windows and passed out face in soup bowl before the champagne was even poured, or how she bragged of having bedded over 500 men and women. Bankhead, by the way, often described herself as ambisextress. And then there was the nudist thing. Bankhead would often answer the door completely naked. This was before the years in which she consumed five packs of cigarettes and two fifths of Old Granddad bourbon a day. She claimed she could drink a bottle in 30 minutes. She took up residence at the LSA Hotel, nicknamed the Easy Lay in Burgess Meredith's memoir. So far, so good. The actor talks about first meeting Bankhead. He arrived at a party in her suite, only to find Bankhead stark naked. Passing out cocaine and booze to guests. Having finished her hostess duties, she confided that she was dying of, quote, the grand desire and subsequently pulled young Meredith into her bedroom. Apparently, the moaning and groaning were operatic. But just before consummation, Bankhead pushed him aside, saying, for God's sakes, don't come inside me. I'm engaged to Jack Whitney. That would be the son of famed businessman Payne Whitney Bankhead would forever maintain. What I do with my bits and pieces is my business. And for every fan that I lose who stuffy two more come along who approve of my lifestyle and indeed Bankhead's escapades were funnier and more risqué than any film comedy she could have hoped to act in a legendary. Such incident occurred the summer of 1933, two years after she returned from a triumphant decade long stretch in the London Theater. In the mood for an extended party bank had did what any in the no actress would have done in those days. She showed up, resplendent in a heavily beaded gown and diamonds at the Garden of

Allah. She'd spent most of the evening making eyes at Johnny Weismueller, the Olympic gold medal swimmer who had just made his Hollywood debut as Tarzan. But by 5:00 in the morning, she had grown tired of simply wondering what lay hidden beneath his loincloth. There are at least two different versions of what happened next. One is the Tallulah, having thus far failed in her advances on Weismueller decided to pull a damsel in distress, fling herself into the pool, fully clothed, screaming that she was going to drown if someone didn't save her. Someone like perhaps the Olympic swimmer standing nearby. The other version is that she and Weismueller drunkenly dove in together. Whatever the beginning, the stories share their most crucial detail, its ending. Once in the water Tallulah's dress and diamonds found their way to the bottom of the pool and she found her way into waist. Weismueller's arms, naked. He carried her out of the pool. The gathered revelers stared at the spectacle of Tarzan and the naked socialite. Everybody has been dying to see my body, Tallulah told the remaining partiers. Now you can.

Scott Tallal: I was going to ask originally, are there any stories that surprised you? And now I have to ask how many of the stories?

Mark Bailey: I mean, they all did. They all surprise me. In part of what surprised me was the permissiveness in terms of public outrageousness in misbehaving was just way out of measure with what I had imagined and with what it is now. I mean, that these stars would pass out in Super Bowls and end up naked in pools with this regularity. And that they were fine. They had reputations maybe, but their careers didn't implode and they weren't torn apart in the press for it and they weren't not getting hired back and uninsurable or whatever. That's different than it is now.

Scott Tallal: But I would imagine in large part that had to have contributed to the founding of the Hollywood code both on screen and off. I mean, no, onscreen they were limiting what could be shown in film, but the exploits were certainly the talk of the town.

Mark Bailey: Yeah, I think so. And I think that there was a kind of puritanical tightening up of how they wanted people to behave and how they wanted them to be represented and that the code was enforced to do that.

Scott Tallal: We talked earlier about how the start of talkies meant that suddenly you had scripts, you had to have lines that had to be memorized and beyond.

Mark Bailey: Well, that's another point to which I didn't bring up, is that you did have to do more work in preparation and remember your lines. And that also maybe put some limits on the revelry.

Scott Tallal: But what other changes happened over the years in terms of how Hollywood was partying?

Mark Bailey: Well, I mean, I think a big change that happened was people shooting on location much more and the ease of moving equipment and the desire to go to different locations and film in some ways that started early and Chaplin was doing that and people were doing that. But for a lot of the years, it seems to me the first half of the last century, so much of production was happening in town on studio lots. So it kept all the actors in town. They lived here and they worked here. And in that way, they went out to these places, Chasen's and Romanoff's, Sincero's, and the Polo Lounge and the Brown Derby. They were just places where they knew they would be sort of welcomed and protected and also seen it and they would find each other there. And so in that way, I think it was a hard charging community that it maybe became less so over time when people could live in different places and went and worked for months in New Orleans or in Atlanta or wherever.

Scott Tallal: Aside from the personalities, you talked about the places that are now institutions, but back then were not. You'd mentioned Garden of Allah, a famous, famous hotel. And the Beverly Hills Hotel, which when it was built was almost a disaster for the owner because nobody was living in Beverly Hills. And no matter what he did he couldn't get people to come out that far.

Mark Bailey: I mean, one of the things that was interesting for me in moving to Hollywood and writing about these places was looking for ones that were still around and not so many of them are. I mean, the Beverly Hills Hotel is and Musso and Franks Grill is. But there's a lot of other places, you know, Garden of Allah is not, Cock and Bull, like different ones. And yeah, these contributed to partying and it was an important ingredient in making it all happen. The book does talk about different places sometimes

like the case of the Brown Derby, which had a cocktail, the Brown Derby, whether they invented the cocktail themselves or it was invented and named after them, which is one of my favorite cocktails, which is bourbon and grapefruit juice and honey syrup or the Cock and Bull which is credited with inventing the Moscow mule and had to do with the fact that the owner of the Cock and Bull was making and distributing his own brand of ginger beer. And he found himself saddled with too many cases of Smirnoff, and he had a surplus of his own brew that he was hoping would go bad. And so in this sort of desperate bid, he kind of poured it all together. He decided he would just mix my remaining ginger beer with this vodka and added some lime and served it up. And he served it actually in the copper mug. And one of the actors who hung out there was a great character actor, Broderick Crawford, who is sort of a giant man and a big drinker. And he apparently was the first customer to give it a try. He'd liked it a lot. He said it had a bit of a kick to it. So that's how the Moscow mule was born. The drink with the velvet kick.

Scott Tallal: Before we wrap, any other stories that you want to share with us?

Mark Bailey: Well, I could read a fun one about Ava Gardener. There is a lot of men who were hard drinking and big screen personalities in that way. But there was also a lot of women out here who were having their own fun and wild time. And Ava Gardner has perhaps my favorite quote in the entire book, a party isn't a party without a drunken bitch lying in a pool of tears, which maybe you can think about for your New Year's party. Probably not a good goal to shoot for. Now that I think about it, though, the story on Ava Gardner I'll read from that.

Mark Bailey: We had a wonderful time. That was all she would say. Eva Gardiner and Frank Sinatra had met before. Years ago at Mocambo. Back when she was still married to Mickey Rooney. Sinatra had led with a soft open, something to the effect of wishing he'd gotten to her first. Gardiner found him charming. They'd bumped into each other a few times since at various nightclubs. Had even been a dinner date once after she'd left Artie Shaw. They kissed a bit at the end of the evening, but Sinatra was still married to Nancy and had kids, so she hadn't let it get too far. This time, though, is different. They were at Darryl Zanuck's house in Palm Springs for a party. It was fall 1949. Sinatra, as usual, was flirting with her like crazy. She put up with it for a while, then reminded him once he got too pushy that he was still married. No, he insisted he

and Nancy were finished, for good, and seeing as he was now available, would she be interested in going for a drive? Gardner grabbed a fifth of whatever for the road, while Sinatra quite famously had a predilection for Jack Daniels to Gardner. The type of booze hardly mattered. It all tasted like hell to her anyway. So bottle in hand. She climbed into Sinatra's Cadillac convertible, and the two of them sped off into the desert night swigging all the way. By the time they came to a stop in the little town of Indio, the streets were deserted. Sinatra pulled her close. They kissed and kissed. And at some point during their escalating passion, Sinatra reached into his glove compartment and pulled out a gun. Scratch that. He pulled out two guns. Both Smith and Wesson, 38. Naturally, they began to shoot up the street lights, a hardware store window. Several rounds that ended up who knows where. Sinatra hit the accelerator and they kept on shooting all the way back to the highway. It was a few hours later when Sinatra's publicist, Jack Keller, received a phone call from the Indio police station. They had a story that hadn't yet reached the press. Not just a story about Frank Sinatra's drunken arrest, but a story of his drunken arrest, along with a famous actress who wasn't his wife. And if Keller wanted to keep it under wraps, he would need to get to Indio fast. The police back then were so much more amenable. Keller immediately called a friend who managed the Hollywood Knickerbocker Hotel, borrowed \$30000 and took a charter flight out of Burbank. By early morning, he paid off anyone who might have been inclined to talk. The cops. The hardware store owner. Some poor drunk schnook who'd been grazed by one of the bullets. Sinatra and Gardner were released without further incident. Gardner, for her part, denied any of this ever happened. When she returned to the house she was renting in Palm Springs and her older sister, Bapi asked how her night with Sinatra had been, all she would say was, we had a wonderful time.

Scott Tallal: So I guess the bottom line is for our whole show, Have a great time on New Year's Eve. Just don't get caught. The book is great. I do recommend it. It's available on Amazon and elsewhere. All the Gin Joints: Stumbling Through Hollywood History. Mark Bailey, thank you so much for joining us on this special New Year's Eve episode.

Scott Tallal: Thank you. You know. Thanks. It's fun to tell these stories. And I think, you know, New Year's is a good time to go out and have some fun and let loose a little bit. I don't know that I'd recommended quite like these folks did, but, you know, I hope everybody has a good time.

Scott Tallal: Thanks for joining us.

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