

R,E,4 - BC-APN--TVWEEK,ADV09-2TAKES - [QL]

<BO>BC-APN--TV Week, adv 09-2 takes, total 990[QL]

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\$adv 09[QL]

AGENCIES AND RADIO OUT[QL]

``M-A-S-H``[QL]

For release Sun., Jan. 9[QL]

From AP Newsfeatures[QL]

APN PRINT SUBSCRIBERS HAVE BEEN MAILED ONE ILLUSTRATION[QL]

By JERRY BUCK[QC]

AP Television Writer[QC]

<RO> LOS ANGELES (AP) _ Hawkeye, B.J., Hot Lips, Klinger, and all the other denizens of the 4077th M.A.S.H. are packing their duffle bags and heading stateside.[PA]

After 11 years they're shutting down the Korean War.[PA]

It means goodbye to one of the most honored and most popular television shows of all time. ``M-A-S-H`` was in the Top 10 for nine out of the 11 years it was on CBS. It's on the air in reruns morning, noon, and night. It has won the Peabody and Humanitas Awards, numerous Golden Globes, Peoples Choice awards, and 12 Emmys.[PA]

The final scene for ``M-A-S-H`` will probably be filmed this week. After that, the series will shut down production at 20th Century-Fox Studios. The last original program, a two-hour movie in which the Korean War ends and they all go home, will be telecast on CBS on Monday, Feb. 28. The show goes into reruns after that. (They're filming out of sequence, so the last show filmed will not be the last one telecast.)[PA]

``It's been a long time and it's a bittersweet ending,`` says Burt

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``In a way it's like life imitating art. The group of people in Korea went through an intense experience. In the final episode the war is ending, they're saying goodbye and going their separate ways.[PA]

``In real life you have a group of actors, writers, and others saying goodbye and going their separate ways. So the final show has added meaning to the actor. It's gong to mean goodbye for the actor in real life as well.''[PA]

Loretta Swit, who is Maj. Margaret ``Hot Lips'' Houlihan, and Alan Alda, who is Capt. Benjamin Franklin ``Hawkeye'' Pierce, are the only remaining members of the original cast.[PA]

Miss Swit says, ``I'm going to miss those people terribly. Artistically, I'm going to feel free. I took Margaret as far as I could. On the other hand, I'm excited about the future of my career. Everyone says 'M-A-S-H' will be a hard act to follow. Everyone agrees with that.''[PA]

The final two-hour episode takes place during three weeks in July 1953. It starts just before the end of the war and ends with everyone going home. More than that Metcalfe doesn't want to say.[PA]

Commercials for the final show may be the most expensive in the history of television. A 30-second spot sells for \$450,000. The two-hour movie will cost more than \$1 million, but considerably less than the \$10 million the show might bring in commercial time.[PA]

Filming of the final episode was delayed several times in the fall. The fires that swept the Malibu area destroyed the ``M-A-S-H'' exterior set. ``It was destroyed one week before it would have been obsolete after being in existence for 11 years,' ' says Metcalfe. ``We had to rebuild.[PA]

``But our biggest problem was that David Ogden Stiers (Maj. Charles Emerson Winchester) got viral hepatitis. We tried juggling the schedule around him but

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where we could film without him. He finally was well enough to return to work in mid-November." [PA]

During the 11 years, there were a number of cast changes. Wayne Rogers (Trapper John) and McLean Stevenson (Lt. Col. Henry Blake) left the show in 1975. Larry Linville (Maj. Frank Burns) left in 1977. Gary Burghoff, who was Radar O'Reilly _ the only actor in both the movie and the series _ left in 1979. [PA]

Joining the series over the years were Harry Morgan as Col. Sherman Potter and Mike Farrell as B.J. Hunnicut, and Stiers as Winchester. In addition, Jamie Farr (Cpl. Maxwell Klinger) and William Christopher (Father John Mulcahy) had their roles increased. [PA]

It was agreed that the show could survive the comings and goings of the actors. Except for Alan Alda. It was inevitable that Alda, having increasing success writing and starring in motion pictures, would leave soon. [PA]

"We've been talking about ending the series for the past two or three years," says Metcalfe. "Each year because the show's so successful in the ratings and so creative CBS has asked us to go another year. It's been a heady experience of doing no wrong. Everything worked, everyone loves you. It's tough to give up. But we knew the end was coming and all of us wanted to get on with other things. [PA]

"At the end of the 10th year we got together and agreed to come back and do a final show ending the war. We didn't want to dribble off as happened to 'Lou Grant.' We'd gotten a lot of mail saying, 'Don't leave us hanging, give us a conclusion.'" [PA]

Metcalfe has also been with "M-A-S-H" since the beginning. He gave up a job as a casting director to take a chance with the new show in 1972. He became

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later, producer the next year, and was named executive producer when Gene Reynolds went to ``Lou Grant.``[PA]

Why did millions of Americans take ``M-A-S-H`` to heart?[PA]

Metcalfe says, `` It was an incredibly lucky and unique blend of chemistry in terms of the actors and the creative side. It was an attitude of not doing a conventional sitcom. Not doing wacky doctors at the front. We were all determined from the outset we wouldn't cater to that concept, even if we went down in flames.``[PA]

``Once we got launched the Vietnam War came into play in that we were able to strike a chord in the country. Not that the Korean War 25 years earlier was Vietnam. We made a clear distinction. But the audience didn't. They saw the irreverence, the antiwar attitude, the humanity and the compassion.``[PA]

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