

July Meeting:

Waverley Film Society will meet at Wadham House, 52 Wadham Parade, Mount Waverley (MEL 61 E2), on **Wednesday, 8th of July**. Apologies can be left with Brett on 9807 3426.

The film to be screened is *The Maltese Falcon* (1941).

A private detective becomes involved with three eccentric criminals and their quest for a priceless statuette.



Last Meeting

- Fourteen members attended and there were two visitors and four apologies;
- *The Little Princess* scored 2.7 stars;
- Anne brought more DVDs for sale
- Low attendance—not unusual for June screenings.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 12th.

The film to be screened is *Now, Voyager* (1942).

A frumpy spinster blossoms under therapy and becomes a glamorous independent woman.



Posters are available for posting in community spaces to advertise the society and the next screening.

The society's website is www.waverleyfilm.org

Our email address is contact@waverleyfilm.org

THE MALTESE FALCON (1941) *(Reference: www.imdb.com)*

Director: John Huston

Writers: Dashiell Hammett (novel), John Huston

Cinematography: Arthur Edson

Music: Adolph Deutsch

Editing: Thomas Richards

Trivia

Cast includes:

Sam Spade

Brigid O'Shaughnessy

Iva Archer

Joel Cairo

Kasper Gutman

Humphrey Bogart

Mary Astor

Gladys George

Peter Lorre

Sydney Greenstreet

- Humphrey Bogart had to supply his own wardrobe. This was common practice at Warner Brothers as a way for the studio to save some money.
- Three of the falcon statuettes made for the production still exist and are conservatively valued at over \$1 million each. This makes them some of the most valuable film props ever made; indeed, each is now worth more than three times what the film cost to make.
- Eight Maltese Falcon statues were used for the movie - two lead and six plaster ones. The lead falcons weighed about 50 pounds each, and Lee Patrick accidentally dropped one on Humphrey Bogart's foot during shooting.
- It was producer Henry Blanke who gave John Huston what he recalled as the single greatest piece of advice he would ever receive as a director: "Shoot each scene as if it was the most important scene in the film."
- At 357 pounds, 60-year-old British newcomer Sydney Greenstreet was so large that the studio had to specially manufacture his entire wardrobe for the role of Kasper Gutman.

Review : The Fat Man Cometh *(Lechuguilla 2007)*

Considered by many film historians as the very first noir film, *The Maltese Falcon* is cinematically important also for making Humphrey Bogart into a Hollywood star, and for being the debut of John Huston as film director. The film's story is complex and convoluted, typical of detective films of that era, and involves a valuable statuette. The plot stalls and meanders throughout most of the film, as we encounter an assortment of strange characters and side issues.

But this is not a plot-driven film. It is character-driven. And the main character, of course, is PI Sam Spade (Bogart). He's not a particularly nice guy. He comes across as overconfident and egotistic. But he's tough as nails. And he knows how to nail the bad guys. A big part of the film is Spade's relationship to femme fatale Brigid (Mary Astor). They engage each other in a battle of wits. And there's more than a hint of romantic involvement between the two.

Enter Kasper Gutman, that thoroughly rotund and intimidating (in a gentlemanly sort of way) king of greed, portrayed with verve and panache by the inimitable Sydney Greenstreet. Gutman, AKA the "Fat Man", is nothing if not erudite and self-assured. And Peter Lorre is a hoot as Gutman's mischievous elf, Joel Cairo, who tries, without success, to threaten Sam Spade.

The film's high contrast B&W lighting renders an effective noir look and feel, one that would be copied in films for years to come. Acting varies from very good to overly melodramatic. The script is very talky. For the most part, the film is just a series of conversations that take place in interior sets.

Stylistic and cinematically innovative, *The Maltese Falcon* has endured as a film classic. I suspect the main reason for its continued popularity is the continued popularity of Bogart.