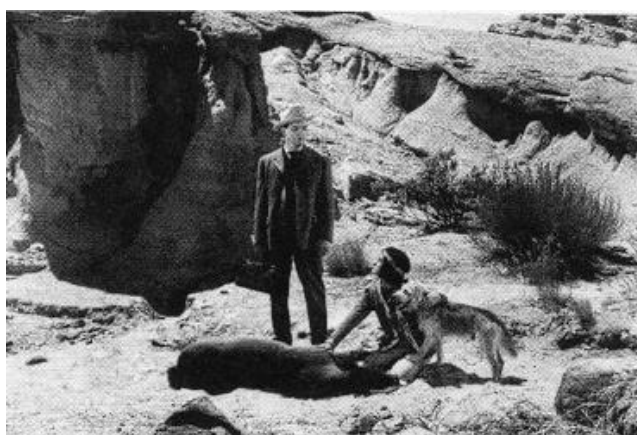


Wild Beauty

US : 1946 : dir. Wallace W Fox : Universal : 61 min
 prod: Wallace W Fox : scr: Adele Buffington : dir.ph.: Maury Gertsman
 Robert "Buzzy" Henry
 Don Porter; Lois Collier; Jacqueline De Wit; Robert Wilcox; George Cleveland; Dick Curtis;
 Eva Pulg; Pierce Lyden; Roy Brent

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	KBytes	Ω	□	≠	Z	⚡	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
5029	2	3	1		3	7	7	3	7	No	June 2000



Gee, can you fix him, doc?

Source: The Universal Story

Speelfilm Encyclopedie review:

"Adele Buffington wrote the story about teacher Don Porter who comes to the indian reservation to teach¹, the love of indian boy Buzzy Henry for the horse Wild Beauty, and the meanies who try to get ankle boots by shooting the wild horses.² It was a mild Western, with Maury Gertsman behind the camera. Wallis was also producer of the film. ** "

The Universal Story comment:

"WILD BEAUTY" was the story of an indian boy and a wild horse (called Wild Beauty). It was also about a doctor and his concern with the various attitudes expressed towards the indian by the white man. Not only that, but it told the story of an Eastern capitalist and a school teacher who, in cahoots, attempt to organise the slaying of a herd of wild horses in

¹ Nope, Lois Collier is the new teacher arriving at the start of the film. Porter plays the local doctor.

² ?? = "rotstreken die enkelen pogen uit te halen"

order to make shoes from their hides. Lois Collier, Don Porter, Robert "Buzz" Henry (as the indian lad), Jacqueline De Wit and Robert Wilcox appeared for producer-director Robert W Fox, but they were all upstaged by the horses on display who, mercifully, were spared scenarist Adele Buff-ington's dialogue."

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 1996", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

Radio Times review:

“A desperately over-complicated Universal programme-filler, ostensibly about a native American boy³ and his horse called Wild Beauty, but also containing an unsavoury subplot about capturing mustangs and turning their hides into shoe leather. There are also a fair number of speeches about the rights of American indians. Only Don Porter emerges with any credit among the grown-ups (although Jacqueline De Wit does attempt a serious portrayal). For hardline B-movie fans only. ** ”

“Western. A native American boy and a doctor fight to protect the boy’s horse from the attentions of a shoe manufacturer after the horse’s hide. ** ”

The Moving Picture Boy entry on Henry:

“Robert - who soon adopted the nickname of "Buzzy", in the tradition of ridin' boys like Buzz Barton - won a medal for trick riding at the age of two in a Colorado rodeo. A mere month or two later he was filming in a Western with Buck Jones, and had made more than a dozen such pictures by the time he was five.

Buzzy or not, he was a very untypical ridin' boy: sensitive-looking (with soulful brown eyes), slender, almost delicate. Starting earlier than Barton, he had ten years as Boy Rider of the Silver Screen. In his late teens, he continued with hardly a let-up. There were four films in 1947: **"KING OF THE WILD HORSES"**, **"LAST OF THE REDMEN"**, **"LAW OF THE CANYON"** and **"ROLLING HOME"**.

In 1948 he was in the Tex Granger serial, and in one or two films a year during the Fifties, including **"THE INDIAN FIGHTER"** (55), **"JUBAL"** (56) and **"COWBOY"** (58). Between times he toured the rodeo circuits.

Buzz Henry was seen in some popular films of the Sixties, like **"SPENCER'S MOUNTAIN"** (63), **"SHENANDOAH"** and **"VON RYAN'S EXPRESS"** (65) and **"TONY ROME"** (67). But he was also in demand as a technical adviser, stunt coordinator and sequence director, and was frequently the second unit director, for instance on **"THE COWBOYS"** (72). His untimely death came at the age Of 40."

³ PC doublespeak for "indian"

Not to be confused with a 1927 film of the same name – also from Universal – which was “a war hero melodrama” with Hugh Allen and June Marlowe. A programme-filler if ever I saw one, this has exactly the look and tone of a “**Lassie**” episode, but without the smart dog to sort things out in the final reel. Johnny (Buzzy Henry) is an orphaned indian boy living with an ersatz grandpa in the shape of a crusty but benign, chin-scratching storekeeper who lets him run more or less wild. Johnny idolises young upstanding local doctor Don Porter, so when he chances on a lamed foal from the wild horse herd on the range, he’s confident the doc can put things right, and sets his heart on a horse of his own, giving it the name of the film title.

These excitements coincide with the arrival of the latest in a line of schoolteachers from Back East, a young schoolma’am fresh from college who finds the social amenities of the reservation leaving something to be desired. Her nose is royally put out of joint when she sees the handsome young doctor dedicating more energy to Johnny’s injured foal (and human patients) than paying court to herself. She also decides the ill-kempt indian boy is in want of proper discipline, and bullies the storekeeper into – in effect – “grounding” him. Johnny of course promptly runs away, and the doctor rebukes her soundly for lack of sensitivity to indian ways, threatening to pack her off back East.

Enter the real villain of the piece in the form of a wealthy suitor of hers, who sees in the form of so many hooves without legal owners a source of instant revenue. From this point out the yarn develops precisely as you’d expect – doctor trounces cad in a fair fight, young but misguided schoolma’m sees the error of her ways, wounded trust of carefree indian lad heals without visible scars, horses move about the landscape in photogenic patterns...

Buzzy Henry (15, but looking and sounding 13) does not make an especially convincing redskin, even in a mop wig, and nor was there much scope in this part to display the riding skills he apparently possessed. It was a boy-and-his-horse movie, and no doubt he was content with that. He was in two matinee serials that same year – “**HOP HARRIGAN**” and “**SON OF THE GUARDSMAN**” – while his film titles eminently reveal an equestrian bent: “**WESTERN FRONTIER**” (35), “**RANGER COURAGE**” (37), “**BUZZY AND THE PHANTOM PINTO**” (41), “**RIDIN’ DOWN THE CANYON**” (42), “**TRIGGER TRAIL**” (44) etc.

See subject index under **HORSES & PONIES, RUNAWAYS / STOWAWAYS, SPECIAL FRIENDSHIPS**, and **WESTERNS** for a sub-category on indian boys.