



The Wittliff Collections

Southwestern Writers Collection

Southwestern & Mexican Photography Collection

A Guide to the Lin Sutherland Collection of Eagle Pennell

1977-1990

Collection 119

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Eagle Pennell
Title:	The Lin Sutherland Collection of Eagle Pennell
Dates:	1977-1990
Abstract:	The Lin Sutherland Collection of Eagle Pennell spans 1977-1990 and documents the films, publicity, and business career of Eagle Pennell, a Texas film director. The collection is separated into nine series: Script Development, Production Crew, Media, Publicity, Film Distribution, Business Information for Maverick Films, Inc., Correspondence, Other Writings by Eagle Pennell and Lin Sutherland, and Artifacts. The collection includes script development of <i>The Whole Shootin' Match</i> , a large number of articles and reviews relating to <i>The Whole Shootin' Match</i> , and the business records of Maverick Films, Inc.
Identification:	Collection 119
Extent:	2 boxes (.50 linear feet)
Language:	English
Repository:	The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University

Biographical Sketch

Eagle Pennell, originally named Glenn Irwin Pennell, was born July 28, 1952 in Andrews, Texas. Pennell showed an interest in film at an early age, filming skits at home with the family Super 8 camera. After high school Pennell attended the University of Texas, studying in the Radio-Film-Television program. He dropped out his junior year to pursue a career in film.

In the early 70s Pennell legally changed his name, his last name paying homage to both director Arthur Penn and Lt. Ross Pennell, a character from John Ford's *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*. His first name is rumored to have been changed to Eagle because he was once told that his nose looked like the beak of an eagle.

Still pursuing a career in film, his first film was a short documentary titled *Rodeo Cowboy*. In 1977 he made his first narrative film, the short film *A Hell of a Note*, which was the inspiration for *The Whole Shootin' Match*. Pennell met Lin Sutherland, a fellow Texan and a writer, in 1977 and together they co-wrote and produced *The Whole Shootin' Match*. This film was made on black and white 16mm film and was shot on location in Austin, Texas. The film was estimated to have cost as little as \$30,000 to make. After production was completed, in 1978 Pennell began entering the film into festivals. *The Whole Shootin' Match* would go on to win second prize at the U.S. Film Festival and was also said to have inspired Robert Redford to create the Sundance Institute.

Following the success of his movie, Pennell began his next project in the early 1980s. Reunited with actors from *The Whole Shootin' Match*, Lou Perryman and Sonny Carl Davis, in 1983 he produced and directed his second full-length feature *Last Night at the Alamo*. This film was also entered into film festivals and won praise at both the New York Film Festival and Telluride Film Festival in Colorado.

Pennell went on to direct four more films: *Ice House* (1989), *Heart Full of Soul* (1990), *City Life* (1990), and *Doc's Full Service* (1994), which were not as successful as his first two. During this time Eagle Pennell was in and out of rehab centers because of his struggle with alcoholism. His marriage, to Nanette Taylor, also ended due to his alcohol addiction. In Houston, Texas on July 20, 2002 Eagle Pennell died and was buried in College Station. Seen as one of the great independent filmmakers of his time, in 2008 a documentary titled *King of Texas* commemorates his work.

Scope and Content Note

The Lin Sutherland Collection of Eagle Pennell materials range from 1977 – 1990, and consists of approximately .50 linear feet. The collection is comprised of scripts, screenplays, drafts, newspaper clippings, film distribution agreements, legal papers, Maverick Films, Inc. business papers, and correspondence. A bulk of the materials relates to Pennell’s film *The Whole Shootin’ Match*, which was co-written and co-produced by Lin Sutherland. Another section of materials that is emphasized in this collection is the film distribution dispute between Maverick Films, Inc. and Pahl Films (1980-1982). According to the documents in series five, box 1 folders 31-34, the dispute revolves around the film rights promised to Pahl Films by Eagle Pennell, who signed them without the correct approvals.

The collection originally had no apparent arrangement, business papers and articles, as were many other papers, placed throughout the collection without any alphabetical or chronological order. The collection is arranged chronologically within nine series. The series: Script Development, Production Crew, Media, Publicity, Film Distribution, Business Information for Maverick Films, Inc., Correspondence, Other Writings by Eagle Pennell and Lin Sutherland, and Artifacts, are also broken into sub-series when needed. Some of the correspondence overlapped in category, so any correspondence related to film-distribution or investor shares were kept within the Film Distribution or Business Information of Maverick Films, Inc. series. The eighth series Correspondence, are the remaining letters from the collection that were not linked with any other category.

Eagle Pennell’s materials were donated to the Wittliff Collections in 2009 by Lin Sutherland, the co-writer and co-producer of *The Whole Shootin’ Match*, associated with Maverick Films Inc.

Series Descriptions

Series I: Script Development, 1979, Undated

Box 1

This series includes writings for *The Whole Shootin’ Match*, including screenplays, drafts, and synopsis. Was placed as the first series because the bulk of the collection relates to this film- either crew information, publicity related to the film, or the film distribution of this film.

Series II: Production Crew, Undated

Box 1

This series includes cast and crew information relating to *The Whole Shootin' Match*, including crew biographical information, contact lists, and *The Whole Shootin' Match Credits*.

Series III: Media, Undated

Box 1

This series includes 7 strips of film, a total of 24 frames. No other film or prints throughout the collection.

Series IV: Publicity, 1977-1984

Box 1

This series includes photocopies of newspaper and magazine articles, and also original newspaper clippings. Separated into sub-series: Newspaper Articles, Magazine Articles, Film Festival Flyers, and Notes. Some of the original newspaper clippings are fragile and should be handled carefully.

Series V: Film Distribution, 1979-1990

Box 1

This series includes film rental agreements, distribution contracts, correspondence between Maverick Films, Inc. and the film distribution companies, and documentation of a legal dispute of a film distribution agreement. Separated into sub-series: Cinema Perspectives, First Run Features, Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), and Pahl Films (German TV).

Series VI: Business Information for Maverick Films, Inc., 1977-1984

Boxes 1-2

This series includes a certificate of incorporation for Maverick Films, Inc., memorandums, stock and share agreements, tax returns, and other financial information. Separated into sub-series: Maverick Films, Incorporated, Board of Directors Meetings, Maverick Films, Inc. Memorandums, Shareholders, Legal papers, and Financial Information.

Series VII: Correspondence, 1977-1978, Undated

Box 2

This series includes correspondence to or from Eagle Pennell and Lin Sutherland, including typed or handwritten letters. Separated into four different folders: Letters to Lin Sutherland and Eagle Pennell, Letter to Lin Sutherland, Letters to Eagle Pennell, and Letters from Lin and Eagle.

Series VIII: Other Writings by Eagle Pennell and Lin Sutherland, Undated

Box 2

This series includes the first draft for "No Drums, No Bugles" screenplay. Pages are out of order, some are numbered while others are not and corrections are made throughout.

Series IX: Artifacts, 1986

Box 2

This series includes a bumper sticker, which the only artifact in this collection.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Open for research

Preferred Citation

The Lin Sutherland Collection of Eagle Pennell, The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University

Acquisition Information

Gift of Lin Sutherland, 2009

Processing Information

Processed Ashley Stone, 2015

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Script Development, 1979, Undated

Box Folder

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | 1 | <i>The Whole Shootin' Match</i> theme, Undated
Written by Karen L. Ford, RTF Assignment. Typed. 1 page. |
| 1 | 2 | <i>The Whole Shootin' Match</i> synopsis, Undated
Typed. 7 pages, includes 5 copies. |
| 1 | 3 | Section from <i>The Whole Shootin' Match</i> screenplay, June 1979
Sent to Toba from Lin Sutherland on June 25, 1979. Typed.
2 pages and an envelope. |
| 1 | 4 | Third draft of <i>The Whole Shootin' Match</i> screenplay, Undated
Written by Lin Sutherland and Eagle Pennell. Registered with
The Writer's Guild of America, No. 188761. Undated. Typed. 93 pages. |

Series II: Production Crew, Undated

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | 5 | Casting call advertisement for a Maverick Film, Inc. production,
October 9, Unknown year. Typed. 1 page. |
| 1 | 6 | <i>The Whole Shootin' Match</i> crew biographical information, Undated.
Typed. 6 pages, 2 copies of the first page and missing pages 4 & 5. |
| 1 | 7 | Cast and crew contact list, includes addresses and phone numbers, Undated.
Typed, with handwritten corrections. 2 pages. |
| 1 | 8 | <i>The Whole Shootin' Match</i> credit drafts, head and tail credits, Undated.
Typed, with handwritten corrections. 3 pages. |
| 1 | 9 | <i>The Whole Shootin' Match</i> credits, complete cast and crew listed, including score
title, Undated. Typed. 11 pages, includes copies. |

Series III: Media, Undated

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|---|----|--|
| 1 | 10 | Negatives, Undated. Frames 1-24. 7 strips of film. |
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Series IV: Publicity, 1977 – 1984

Box Folder

Newspaper Articles, 1977-1982

- 1 11 Photocopied Newspaper clippings, 1978 – 1980.
The Daily Texan, March 1978. 1 page, 2 copies.
The Houston Post, March 1, 1978. 1 page.
Austin American Statesman, March 3, 1978. 1 page, 2 copies.
Austin American Statesman, March 12, 1978. 1 page.
Box Office, April 3, 1978. 1 page, 2 copies.
New York Times, April 21, 1978. 1 page, 3 copies.
Desert News, September 12, 1978. 1 page, 2 copies.
The Hollywood Reporter, April 25, 1979. 1 page, 2 copies.
The Hollywood Reporter, August 14, 1979. 1 page, 2 copies.
New York Times, October 28, 1979. 1 page, 3 copies.
Variety- The Minneapolis Star, December 13, 1979. 1 page.
Variety, March 5, 1980. 2 pages, 2 copies.
Unknown newspapers, Undated. 2 pages.
- 1 12 Newspaper clippings, originals, 1977 – 1982.
Austin American Statesman, August 18, 1977. 1 page.
Austin American Statesman, August 19, 1977. 1 page.
Dallas Times Herald, March 22, 1978. 2 pages.
Back Stage, July 14, 1978. 2 pages.
The Hollywood Reporter, March 27, 1978. 2 pages.
New York Times, October 28, 1979. 1 page.
The Houston Post, February 17, 1982. 1 page.
Unknown newspapers, Undated. 4 pages.

Magazine Articles, 1978-1984

- 1 13 Magazine articles, 1978 – 1984.
Texas Monthly, May 1978. 2 pages.
Texas Monthly, July 1978. 1 page.
American Film Magazine, December/January 1979.
2 pages, 2 copies.
Film Texas, January 1979. Entire issue, 15 pages.
Film in the Cities, January/February 1982. Entire issue, 4 pages.
American Film Magazine, September 1984. 5 pages, 2 copies.

Series II: Publicity, continued

Box Folder

Film Festival Flyers, 1978-1979

- 1 14 Dallas Eighth Annual USA Film Festival, March 1978. Includes Eagle Pennell's itinerary, festival presentation schedule, and festival program. Typed. 71 pages.
- 1 15 Film Society of Lincoln Center *The Whole Shootin' Match* screening, April/May 1979. Includes WSM show time, film synopsis, and biography on Eagle Pennell. Typed. 1 page.
- 1 16 PR Flyer, *The Whole Shootin' Match*

Notes, Undated

- 1 17 Notes for *The Whole Shootin' Match* PR and interviews, Undated. Typed and handwritten. 13 pages.

Series V: Film Distribution, 1979 – 1990

- 1 18 Memorandum to Shareholders, May 29, 1982. Discussing the distribution of *The Whole Shootin' Match* to Chanel 4 in England and also briefly mentions plans for future film distribution, and Sutherland's current projects. Written by Lin Sutherland. Types. 1 page, 3 copies.
- 1 19 Cast, crew, and investor shares for German TV and British sales, Undated. Typed, with handwritten corrections. 6 pages.

Cinema Perspectives, 1979-1989

- 1 20 *The Whole Shootin' Match* film rental ad, Undated. Includes an overview of the film: the production information, Eagle Pennell biography, and a summary of the film. Typed. 1 page, 3 copies.
- 1 21 Distribution agreements, May 1979 – January 1980. Agreement between Maverick Films, Inc. and Cinema Perspectives, and an agreement between Cinema Perspectives and Rotterdam Arts Foundation. Typed. 5 pages.
- 1 22 Royalty Statements, April 1981 – January 1989. Typed, with handwritten corrections. 8 pages.

Series V: Film Distribution, continued

Box Folder

Cinema Perspectives, 1979-1989, continued

- 1 23 Film distribution letter from Lin Sutherland to Ray Fisher (Cinema Perspectives) and Harvey Corn (Certified public accountant), February 1980. Discusses that all revenue information sent directly to Harvey Corn, not Maverick Films, Inc. Typed. 3 pages.
- 1 24 Film distribution letters from Ray Fisher to Lin Sutherland, and to Lewis Black, March 1980 – January 1982. Discusses royalties and distribution activity with German TV and England Chanel 4. Typed and handwritten letters. 8 pages.

First Run Features, 1982-1990

- 1 25 Distribution agreement, September 15, 1982. Signed by Lin Sutherland. Typed. 18 pages.
- 1 26 Royalties from *The Whole Shootin' Match* distribution, July 1989 – July 1990. Typed. 6 pages.
- 1 27 Film rental contracts for *The Whole Shootin' Match*, September 1982 –November 1983. Contracts between Lin Sutherland, Frances Spielman, and Susan Ryan. Agreements for *The Whole Shootin' Match* to show at the Agee Room- Bleecker Street Cinema in New York City, New York; the Honolulu Academy of Arts in Honolulu, Hawaii; and the Harry Peterson Company in Pontiac, Michigan. Typed. 5 pages.
- 1 28 Reports on *The Whole Shootin' Match* distribution periods. December 1983 – September 1984. Typed. 4 pages, and an envelope.
- 1 29 Film distribution at the 8th Street Playhouse. October 1982. Letters discussing the *The Whole Shootin' Match* showing cancelation, between Frances Spielman (First Run Features) and Steven Hirsch (8th Street Playhouse) and Maverick Films, Inc. Typed. 3 pages.

Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), 1979

- 1 30 Film distribution inquiry, May 1979. Addressed to Eagle Pennell from Robert D. Kanten (PBS). Typed. 1 page, 3 copies.

Series V: Film Distribution, continued

Box Folder

Pahl Films (German TV), 1980-1982

- 1 31 Pahl Films and Maverick Films, Inc. *The Whole Shootin' Match* purchase dispute; Pahl Film letter to Eagle Pennell, June 1980. Discussing that Pennell was unauthorized to sign film distribution contract, Pahl Film asking for their advance and expenses to be returned. Typed. 1 page.
- 1 32 Pahl Films and Maverick Films, Inc. *The Whole Shootin' Match* purchase dispute; Letters from Timothy Mashburn, lawyer (at Robinson, Felts, Starnes, & Latting law office) representing Maverick Films, Inc., June 1980 – March 1982. Addressed to Michael Traut, lawyer (at Traut, Findeisen, Prof. German law office) representing Pahl Films and Lin Sutherland. Discuss the distribution dispute of *The Whole Shootin' Match*. Typed. 15 pages.
- 1 33 Pahl Films and Maverick Films, Inc. *The Whole Shootin' Match* purchase dispute; Letters from Michael Traut (at Traut, Findeisen, Prof. German law office) representing Pahl Films, September 1980 - April 1981. Addressed to Robinson, Felts, Starnes, & Latting law offices. Discuss the distribution dispute of *The Whole Shootin' Match*. Typed. 5 pages.
- 1 34 Pahl Films and Maverick Films, Inc. *The Whole Shootin' Match* purchase dispute; Letters from Lin Sutherland, April 1981. Addressed to Michael Traut (Pahl Films lawyer). Discuss the payments Maverick Films, Inc. will pay to Pahl Films and also includes handwritten notes about the amount that Eagle Pennell owes Maverick Films, Inc. Typed and handwritten. 1 page.

Series VI: Maverick Films, Inc. Business Records, 1977-1984

Maverick Films, Incorporated, 1977

- 1 35 Portfolio draft and portfolio, 1977. Typed, portfolio draft was handwritten corrections. 22 pages.
- 1 36 Prospectus draft and prospectus, 1977. Typed, prospectus draft has handwritten corrections. 1 page.
- 1 37 Bylaws and Articles. 1977. Typed. 16 pages.
- 1 38 Certificate of Incorporation. July 1977. Typed. 2 pages.

Series VI: Maverick Films, Inc. Business Records, continued

Box Folder

- 1 40 Board of Directors Meetings. August 1977 – June 1980. Typed, some pages have handwritten corrections or signatures. 13 pages.
- 2 1 Memorandums. May 1978-February 1983. Documents include memo drafts, budget estimates, and copies/originals of meeting minutes. Typed, some pages include handwritten notes or signatures. 68 pages.

Shareholders, 1977 – 1981, Undated

- 2 2 Stock and Share agreement drafts. Undated. Typed, some pages have white-out marks. 9 pages.
- 2 3 Cast and crew share papers. March 1978 – April 1981. Includes share estimates, budget drafts, and share certificates. Typed, some pages have handwritten corrections/notes and white-out marks. 21 pages.
- 2 4 Investor share papers. December 1977 – September 1979. Includes an investor call list, investor share and budget drafts, and share certificates. Typed, some pages have handwritten notes. 9 pages.
- 2 5 Legal papers. June 19, 1980 – June 24, 1980. Includes a letter to Lin Sutherland from Timothy Mashburn (lawyer from Robinson, Felts, Starnes, and Latting) and a letter to Jim Rexrode from lawyer Timothy Mashburn. Typed. 4 pages and 2 envelopes.

Financial Information, 1977-1984

- 2 6 Maverick Films, Inc. tax return. 1977 and March 1978. Addressed to Lin Sutherland, tax return completed by Harvey Corn, a certified public accountant. Includes the 1977 tax return, financial statement prepared for tax return, and the included March 1978 letter. Typed. 10 pages.
- 2 7 Bank statements. March 1982, October 1983, and October 1984. Typed. 3 pages.
- 2 8 Checks. February 1983 and March 1978. Includes a check from Lin Sutherland to David Smith (February 1983) and a check cashing out 800 stock shares (March 1978). Typed, handwriting on check and envelope. 1 check, 1 page & 1 envelope.

Series VI: Maverick Films, Inc. Business Records, continued

Box Folder

Financial Information, continued

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|---|----|---|
| 2 | 9 | Production budgets. September 1977 – September 1978. Includes budget and share drafts, and a summary of details picture cost for “Shrecha”- Texas Gypsy (not filled out). Typed, handwritten in areas. 7 pages. |
| 2 | 10 | Accounting data. December 1977 – February 1978. Includes handwritten accounting ledgers. Handwritten. 12 pages. |
| 2 | 11 | Contrast of sale for “A Hell of a Note” film. September 27, 1977. Eagle Pennell selling film rights to Maverick Films, Inc. Labeled as a copy. Typed, signed by Eagle Pennell and Lin Sutherland. 1 page. |

Series VII: Correspondence, 1977-1978, Undated

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|---|----|---|
| 2 | 12 | Letters to Lin Sutherland and Eagle Pennell. 1977, Undated. Includes two copies of a letter from Kim Henkel at Universal City Studios- congratulating Lin and Eagle about their screenplay “Comin’ Back to go” and the screening of “A Hell of a Note”; letter from Frank Binney at Frank Binney Film Production- sending a mailing address and requesting copies of film PR and reviews. Typed and handwritten. 3 pages. |
| 2 | 13 | Letters to Lin Sutherland. April 25, 1978, Undated. Includes a letter from Diane Young, discussing a possible opportunity with New Line Cinema; a letter from Jim, supplying a possible address for David Smith; and a letter from an investor inquiring about her contract. Handwritten. 3 pages. |
| 2 | 14 | Letters to Eagle Pennell. December 15, 1977, January 30, 1977, February 16, 1978, and Undated. Includes letters about Pennell’s application for the Independent Filmmaker Program (American Film Institute); rejection letter for Pennell’s American Film Institute grant application; and 2 letters discussing film progress and a script. Typed and handwritten. 5 pages, and 2 envelopes. |
| 2 | 15 | Letters from Lin and Eagle. September 30, 1977, October 12, 1977, and Undated. Includes a letter from Lin Sutherland to Gregory Curtis, about <i>The Whole Shootin’ Match</i> ; letter from Eagle Pennell to Charles Blumentrist, about <i>A Hell of a Note</i> screenings; and a letter from Eagle Pennell to Karen Cooper (Film Forum), about screening <i>A Hell of a Note</i> . Typed and handwritten. 3 pages. |

Series VIII: Other Writings by Eagle Pennell and Lin Sutherland, Undated

Box Folder

2 16 "No Drums, No Bugles" screenplay. Undated. First draft. Typed, some handwritten corrections. 100+ pages.

Series IX: Artifacts, 1986

Box Folder

2 17 Bumper sticker: "Give up sex! I'll help you taper off." 1986.