



In publicity photos several years ago for the movie, "Annapolis", the midshipmen were all sharply lined up in front of an imposing building that resembled the Parthenon. Hmmm. In my Navy career I visited the Naval Academy many times and knew there was no such building there. Then it hit me. How could I not recognize Founder's Hall in Girard College? The school for fatherless boys in Philly had been my home from age six to 17, and I spent lots of time near or in the imposing building. The movie's producers decided that filming at Girard in Philly was more convenient and cheaper than doing it at the real Naval Academy in Maryland.

If you're interested in visiting Girard College, where many "Annapolis" exteriors were filmed, it's at 21st Street and Girard Avenue. The school's beautifully historic campus was built in the early 1830s, as endowed by the estate of Philadelphia millionaire Stephen Girard.

I recall another Philly film involving me. In the spring of 1951, students at the city's Museum College of Art answered an ad asking us to sign up as extras for scenes being filmed in South Philly for a big Cecil B. DeMille movie, "The Greatest Show on Earth." The pay was \$5 plus free lunch. However, when we arrived all dressed up in coats and ties at where Veteran's Stadium now stands at 3600 S. Broad Street, we were immediately assigned to pose as members of the rope crew that raised the Big Top for the famed Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus.

We were in several scene takes, all dusty and sweaty as we heaved and pulled the ropes of the enormous canvas. When that was done, we had some easier assignments posing as fans in the bleachers and casual strollerse gawking at side shows.

Probably the most Phillyish (is that a word?) of the films shot in City of Brotherly Love was the original "Rocky" in 1975, and its many sequels. As a grad of the Museum College, I felt pride as Rocky ran up the steps, then spun around on the plaza and raised his arms in a victory salute. The museum, one of the most famous and extensive in the world, is at 26th Street and Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

I enjoyed seeing scenes of the boxer's early morning runs along Delaware Avenue in South Philly, Rocky's apartment on East Tusculum Street and the Washington Avenue Italian open air market.

A few notes on other films made in Philly. For 1983's "Trading Places", early scenes were in the posh Union League Club at Broad and Locust. In the film, when hustler Eddie Murphy roams

the streets as a panhandler, he's seen on Broad, Market and Chestnut Streets. One sad element is that many of the interiors, supposedly of Philly's stock market locales, were actually shot in the doomed World Trade Center in New York City.

The 1972 musical "1776" was filmed in and around Independence Hall at 5th and Chestnut Streets. The building has been faithfully maintained, and is a world-famed tourist destination. Just across the plaza, the original Liberty Bell dwells in its own glass house.

The 1993 movie, "Philadelphia" was filmed at various locations in the city. Tom Hanks and his on-screen attorney, Denzel Washington, were shown at courtroom interiors and exteriors of City Hall, at Broad and Market. Also there were scenes at the University of Pennsylvania, at 34th and Chestnut, and at the Spectrum Stadium on South Broad.

The 1940 movie, "The Philadelphia Story", starring Jimmy Stewart, Katharine Hepburn and Cary Grant, and its remake as a 1956 musical, "High Society", starring Frank Sinatra, Grace Kelly (native Philadelphian) and Bing Crosby, were made in Hollywood. However, the story was actually about the Main Line suburbs several miles west of Philly where the very, very rich live.

Other films made in Philly include 1998's "The Sixth Sense", 1981's "Blowout", 1995's "Twelve Monkeys" and "Beloved" in 1997. One of my favorite movies, "Witness" filmed in 1985, had many early scenes shot in Philly's 30th Street Station, at 30th and Market, a nostalgically familiar place to me from my Navy days when I was leaving for sea duty, and finally coming home after WWII and Korea service.

In the past century, hundreds of movies and TV programs were filmed in Philly. You can be sure producers are now somewhere around Broad and Market even as I write, considering locations for the next starring role for the City of Brotherly Love.

When planning your next visit to Philly, set up a day on your itinerary to see all of its famous movie-making sites. And when you run up the steps of my alma mater, the Philly Museum, and wave your arms Rocky style, be sure you have someone to catch it on video.