

# Just Dino

The official journal of THE DEAN MARTIN ASSOCIATION

It's Halloween and Martin & Lewis are  
**SCARED STIFF**


**THE ITALIAN JOB**  
Celebrating Italian-American Heritage and Culture Month

Move over 61-year old James Bond... Dean Martin IS Matt Helm  
**DINO'S DOUBLE-O LIFE**



# WELCOME BACK!

The DMA's official monthly newsletter returns!

ISSN 2977-1935



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MEMORY HIVE

# DIRECT FROM THE BAR

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Just Dino is the exclusive and fully-authorized newsletter published only by us in the UK - and distributed worldwide since November 1960. The Dean Martin Association is totally lionized to the man himself, his life and career. Wherever you live, whoever you are, I dedicate your Association to Dean Martin and to you — as you support us by being a valued member.

Bernard H Thorpe

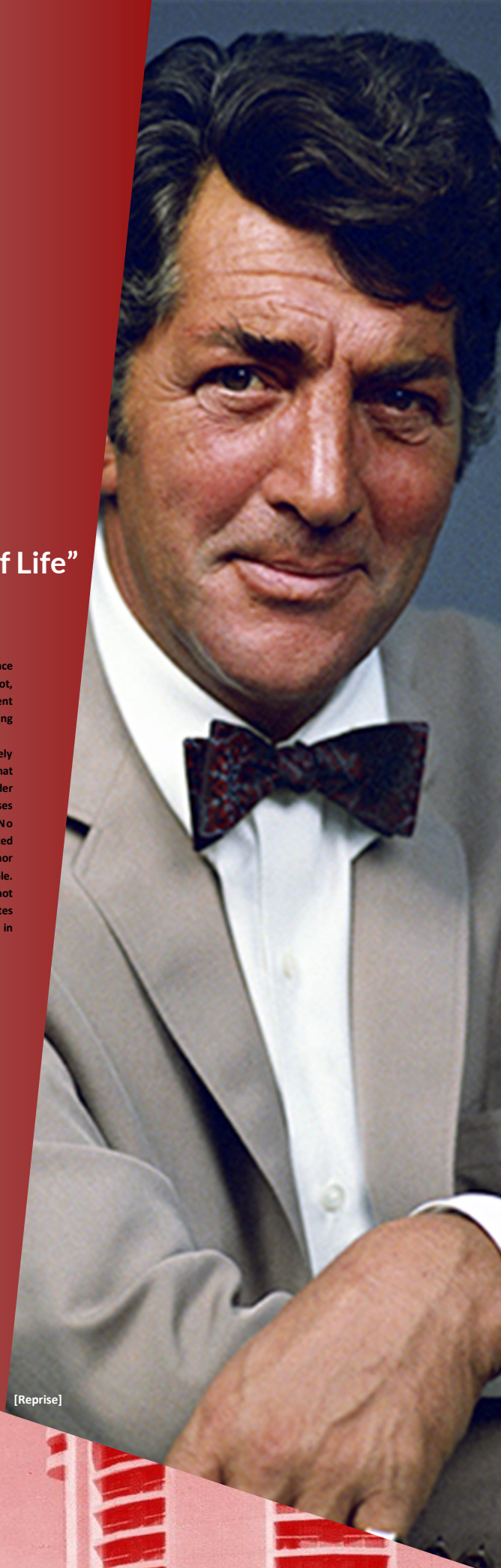
Co-founder, President (1960-2015) and  
Chief Executive (1960-2015)

[Reprise]

WITH THANKS TO: Mark Adams, Carole Barker, Kent Edens, Russell Hawkins, George Daniel Long, Holly Salewski, Richard Shelton, The Estate of Bernard H Thorpe, CDM Ltd, DRP Touring Ltd and Veritas Entertainment Ltd



MEMORY HIVE  
CO.UK



**T**o echo the very first words of our very first edition in the Fall of 1960...Well, here we are at long last!

We are immensely proud to relaunch our official journal! The last issue was twelve years ago when our co-founder Bernard H Thorpe was at the helm.

Growing up in the home of a single mom who loved and adored the many talents of Dean Martin, obviously his influence was very present. My mom would play his music, sometimes on repeat, on a regular basis. While she liked other artists, Dean was her favorite and while I loved listening to his music, I had my style that I preferred to listen to. But my sweet mom was persistent with her enjoyment of Dean's music, and I could not help but follow her lead. I feel that if she knew what I was doing now with The Dean Martin Association, the chances of her thumping me over the head would be very great. In the end though, I feel that she would be proud of me. This is truly a dream, as well as an honor to be a part of this wonderful group of people. Prior to coming on staff with the DMA, I can

remember writing to Elliot a few times asking him if I could please be involved with his work, a work which began with his father, Bernard H Thorpe, in 1960. There finally came a day when, through a mutual friend of ours, the invitation was presented to me. Words do not adequately explain the feeling I had when I opened and read his email asking me to come on board.

We began with relaunching the Podcast and have welcomed guests such as Richard Shelton, Mark Adams, Mark Halliday, Jessica Martin, Nancy Sinclair as well as others. We launched a Facebook page in February 2023 and, at the time of writing of this editorial, we already have members in their thousands... Over the past few months, the DMA has not only experienced tremendous regrowth, but we have also experienced some exciting times as well. We have friends all over the world because of this man known as "The King of Cool." We have traveled roads together, we have learned about this man and his career together, in addition to making some incredibly beautiful memories along the way.

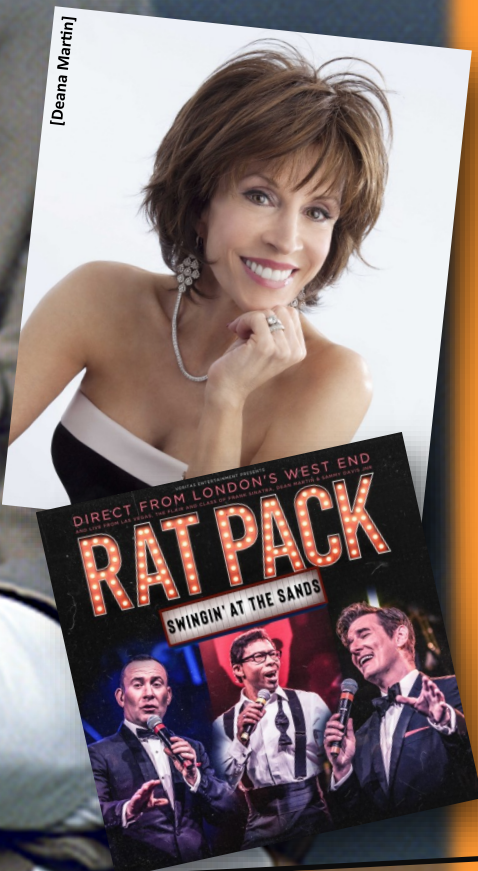
It is people like you, who have brought us that growth and excitement as we travel "side by side" on our journey of keeping the legacy alive of Dean Martin.

We are more than honored that you chose to spend a portion of your day with us as we share song history, movie moments, a little bit of golf and so many other wonderful moments of this remarkable entertainer's life.

We hope too that the return of our monthly newsletter will also give you the opportunity to share with us your memories of Dean. Every month, you'll get new features, occasional archival and historic articles, updates of what the club is doing - and your chance to get involved by way of our letters page ('Get in Touch' at deanmartinassociation.com with your thoughts). Just as it's always been, **Just Dino** is for you, so tell us what kind of things you want us to include, what you want to see, and we'll do our best!

*"Don't know what's comin' tomorrow, maybe it's trouble and sorrow...but we'll travel the road, sharin' our load, side by side..."*

Cindy Williford.



Dates for your diary...

**Deana Martin LIVE!**

Fridays weekly, online

**Sinatra: Raw**

21 Oct Cadogan Hall, London UK

**Sinatra: The Retirement Concert**

29 Oct Grand, Wolverhampton, UK

**The Rat Pack Swingin' At the Sands**

3 Nov The Apex, Bury St Edmunds, UK

**Joe Scalissi Sings Dean Martin**

4 Nov Opera House, Woodstock, IL, USA

**The Definitive Rat Pack**

11 Nov Ritz Carlton, Cayman Islands

21 Nov Palais de Congrès, Perpignan, France

**Mother Goose**

24 Nov> Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham, UK

**The Definitive Rat Pack**

3 Dec The Mill at Sonning, Reading, UK

**The Rat Pack A Swingin' Christmas At the Sands**

5 Dec Adelphi Theatre, London, UK

VISIT THE FOLLOWING FOR LOTS MORE GLOBAL VENUES/DATES...  
[deanamartin.com](http://deanamartin.com)  
[everymantheatre.org.uk/shows/mother-goose](http://everymantheatre.org.uk/shows/mother-goose)  
[joescalissi.com](http://joescalissi.com)  
[richardshelton.co.uk](http://richardshelton.co.uk)  
[swinginathesands.co.uk](http://swinginathesands.co.uk)  
[thedefinitiveratpack.com](http://thedefinitiveratpack.com)

**SHELTON IS SINATRA: RAW**

*"Shelton as Sinatra is quite simply phenomenal"*  
Mike Young, BBC

★★★★★ 'Remarkable, masterful, must see' - The Times  
 ★★★★★ 'Mesmerising, fascinating' - Love London Love Culture  
 ★★★★★ 'Remarkable' - Broadway World  
 ★★★★★ 'A glorious and compelling masterpiece' - Londontheatre1.com  
 ★★★★★ 'Sheer brilliance' - Cams Theatre Passion  
 ★★★★★ 'Pure gold' - ActDrop  
 ★★★★★ 'Goose-bumps guaranteed' - Entertainment Focus  
 ★★★★★ 'Unmissable' - One4Review

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# THE ITALIAN JOB

Every October, it's Italian-American Heritage and Culture Month across the US, and we join in with the annual celebrations ...

The first heritage month was October 1989, by proclamation of the US President and Congress, to honor the achievements and contributions of Italian immigrants and their descendants living in the United States, most notably in the arts, science, and culture. The way the month is celebrated varies across the nation, but invariably involves, music, beautiful traditional cuisine, fireworks and so on, quite often where there are a high proportion of Italian families - but everyone is always welcome. Some events even go so far as meatball eating contests, so it's always great idea to arrive hungry! With strong Italian heritage myself, I can attest to the sheer heavenly bliss of the - aroma of thick tomato sauce, spaghetti and meatballs forever permeating around my grandparents' house whenever I visited as a kid.

The DMA embraces the heritage month by celebrating Dean's roots and his love for his home country. We post throughout the month on our social pages too, so be sure to check those out.

While he rarely travelled outside the US (his fear of flying has been well documented), Dean did travel to Rome in 1957 to film *Ten Thousand Bedrooms* [MGM] (co-starring Anna Maria Alberghetti, above right [MGM]). One of his most enchanting albums was *DINO - ITALIAN LOVE SONGS* (recorded September 1961 towards the end of his Capitol contract), with some Italian-flavored ballads and love songs. It remains a perennial favorite here at the DMA and can often be heard drifting from out a set of speakers.

Throughout his recording career, certainly more within his Capitol tenure, Dean would release some wonderful Italian-laced singles and songs, including

these gems: "That's Amore" of course, "Come Back To Sorrento", "In Napoli", "The Man Who Plays the Mandolino", "Volare (Nel Blu Di Pinto Di Blu)" and "Innamorata". That latter song jumped out at me the first time I heard Dean sing it in *Artists and Models*, then found I really appreciated his studio version even more. It's a plaintive song about unrequited love, and Dean's vocalizations give the lyrics a longing, searching passionate style as only he can.

*Saluto i nostril cugini italiani.*

Elliot Thorpe.

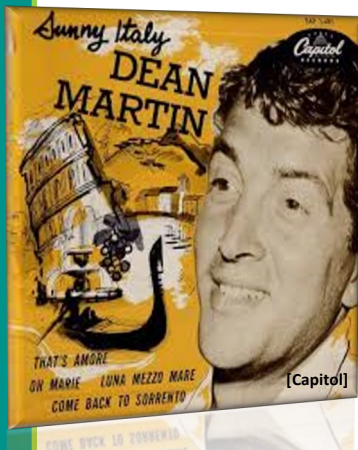
**T**orna a Surriento" (translated as "Come Back to Sorrento") is a Neapolitan song composed in 1894 by Ernesto De Curtis, with lyrics written by his brother Giambattista De Curtis.

The wonderfully melodic song is indeed a love song. But instead of the love for a person, it tells of the love of someone for their town. The Prime Minister of Italy Giuseppe Zanardelli was visiting the coastal town that boasts stunning views of the Bay of Naples and it is said that the song was written as a plea to Zanardelli to help the ailing town of Sorrento which needed investment and a sewage system. The song speaks of the beauty of Sorrento with its breathtaking views of the sea and the citrus perfume that floats in the air from the orange groves.

Dean, with his Italian roots, must have felt a connection to this song and on Monday November 19th 1951, he recorded his outstanding rendition of the popular song for Capitol. Arranged by Gus Levene and conducted by Dick Stabile and his Orchestra, it was released as a single the following June. The song is sung mostly in Italian but features an English verse written by lyricist Alice Mattullah. Dean's first full-length LP *DEAN MARTIN SINGS* was released January 12th, 1953, featuring "Torna a Surriento" as track 4.

Dean also recorded "Take Me in Your Arms" which features the melody of "Torna a Surriento" to new lyrics adapted by Joseph J. Lilley. Dean recorded this version September 8th, 1961. Although every Dino fan probably struggles to name their favorite song from Dean, "Torna a Surriento" remains mine. I always come back to the emotion in which Dean sings this Italian standard. Take another listen, and pay special to the heart-wrenching line in the English verse just before we head back into the chorus where Dean sings 'Oh, how could you go away...' The warmth in Dean's voice and the controlled portamento styling Dean brings, makes my heart ache every time. Combined with the tremolo of the mandolin and the richness of the violins, it is truly a song that one could never tire from.

Thomas Brady.



# MOVIE MOMENTS: SCARED STIFF

Now for the scare that's played for laughs. This one is a good example of the slapdash spook hokum with all the tricks thrown in. This is Martin and Lewis with ghosts, ghouls, girls and a haunted island to boot.



You couldn't be wrong in thinking that *Scared Stiff* is just a little bit familiar to film historians and fans of post-war US cinema. Based on the 1909 stage play *The Ghost Breaker*, it was first adapted in 1914 and then remade in 1922. Paul Dickey's and Charles W Goddard's story clearly had some life to it because Bob Hope starred in the third adaptation *The Ghost Breakers* in 1940.

Abbott and Costello had found great success in meeting the Universal Monsters in a couple of their movies, and so Paramount clearly wanted to get into the spirit, too, using their own top box office draws in a similar fashion. But with no established movie monsters to draw on, it was decided to once again look at *The Ghost Breakers*. With a revised script by Herbert Baker and Walter DeLeon, Dean and Jerry signed up, filming in June 1953 for a July release that same year.

Larry Todd (played to the usual M&L standard by Dean) and Myron Mertz (again playing to type) work at the Chit-Chat Club when Larry gets himself into a scrape by fooling around with a hoodlum's girl. In a bid to save his skin, Larry finds a lifeline in Elizabeth Scott's Mary Carroll, who has just inherited a mysterious locale in Cuba. They accompany her to Lost Island in order to protect her, even though Myron has reservations because the island is haunted - but not before the boys have had the opportunity to perform a Latin number with guest star Carmen Miranda!

There's so much to enjoy in this comedy romp. One can't really even call it a horror, unless the sight of Jerry's reflection peering out from a full-length mirror unnerves you! Yet there's a fog shrouded lake, creaking doors, sentient chairs and a possessed musical organ, all one would expect from a haunted house movie.

Dean was never a fan of horror, nor of gratuitous movie violence, but here he's clearly enjoying himself, knowing that the joke is, as usual, on Jerry. But there's more equality here, with Dean's screen magnetism not cancelled out by Jerry's overbearing impish humor.

Likewise, Jerry himself too isn't bogged down by Dean's big brother character, and has much to do under his own steam. Arguably, for once he's at his best when he's away from Dean: take the scenes in the castle when he's sitting on the high-backed chair. It's classic Jerry and he revels in the physicality of the elaborate sets. It enhances his own performance throughout and maybe, just maybe, shows he *did* have the ability to go it alone one day.

The audiences of the time expected a scatterbrained film when Martin and Lewis were involved, and *Scared Stiff* was no different. In fact, I'd be bold enough to suggest that this was one of their better vehicles, before the behind-the-scenes issues started truly evolving. At the height of their game, this was only four years into their big screen career and already seven movies behind them. *Scared Stiff* is a joyous experience, and a

surprisingly effective backdrop to the usual antics of the boys. With a plot involving lost treasure, this movie is a lost treasure in itself. It further defines Martin and Lewis as a duo who could do no wrong and while their movies aren't by any stretch of the imagination deep thinking philosophical works with underlying messages, they do exactly what they're intended for: to swoon as Dean sings his heart out, to laugh as Jerry pratfalls everywhere and to finish with a smile and a desire to want to see their next picture.

Directed by George Marshall and produced by Hal Wallis for Paramount Pictures, with atmospheric photography by Ernest Laszlo, *Scared Stiff* has a delightful score by Leith Stevens. Songs include: "The Enchilada Man", "What Have You Done For Me Lately?", "When Someone Thinks You're Wonderful", "I Don't Care If The Sun Don't Shine" and "San Domingo".

Elliot Thorpe.



Above: Jerry Lewis and Dean Martin with Carmen Miranda [Paramount]

Right: newspaper banner advertisement, August 1953 [Paramount]

Below: theatrical release poster, July 1953 [Paramount]



# Cindy is in the DMA Listening Booth this issue, and she's spinning "The Story of Life"



I spent a few days in Steubenville Ohio for the June 2023 Dean Martin Festival It was my first visit to this part of the United States. As I drove to an event, I was surrounded by beautiful countryside with pastures and cornfields. I took in the majesty of the countryside, I couldn't help but think of a song which without a doubt, is my no. 1 song Dean sang. It is one I play for my grandchildren to calm down or to fall asleep to. Most importantly, it is a song my mother taught me to love. As I drove, I could hear Dean sing this beautiful song. "The Story of Life" was written by Anna Sosenko, Fred Spielman and Stella Unger. Dean recorded it a couple of times. The first, December 12, 1960 and then again February 10, 1961. The latter recording was released as a single May 22, 1961 and included on the 1965 Tower Records album THE LUSH YEARS.

*"All this is mine, the blue of the sky, the feel of the soil, the sun flaming high. The sight of a bird on the wing, the story of life is a glorious thing. All this is mine, the green of the corn, the deep of the night, the sleepy faced dawn. The cold of the fall or the spring, the story of life is a glorious thing."*

Cindy Williford.



IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF

## Just Dino

The official journal of THE DEAN MARTIN ASSOCIATION

- We rate Dino's Top 10 movie roles
- Duets - some came running to record with Dean
- DINO LATINO: the 1962 Reprise album reviewed
- ...and more!

Issue 417

10 November 2023

Join our group on Facebook or subscribe to our mailing list at [deanmartinassociation.com/contact](http://deanmartinassociation.com/contact)



Dean Martin's extraordinary legacy continues and this very first DMA Annual celebrates his legendary career which now spans beyond an incredible 80 years.

Released worldwide in hardback on 1 November 2023, *The Dean Martin Association Yearbook 2024* is illustrated throughout with brand-new, exclusive essays and articles from a handful of Dean's biggest fans. It also contains a foreword from Francie Mendenhall, one of Dean's original Goldiggers.

Join the party as we share our fondest memories and our favorite moments of one of the world's greatest and most remarkable entertainers.

All proceeds of the publication will be donated to [share4children.org](http://share4children.org).

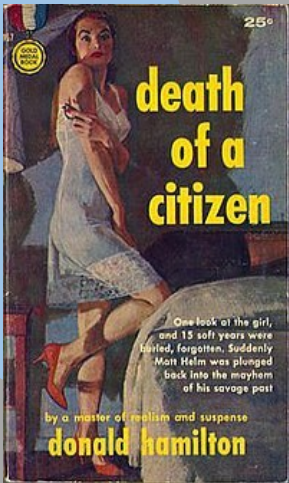
# SPIES! GUNS! SLAYGIRLS!

## IT'S... Dino's Double-o Life

### DEAN MARTIN IS MATT HELM



This year marks the 61<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the premiere of the first James Bond film, *Dr. No*, on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1962. This date would mark the beginning of a franchise that would be a fan favorite for movie goers around the world.



While many are familiar with Ian Fleming's James Bond series, some may be less familiar with an American author in Santa Fe, New Mexico, who wrote his own take on the famous spy.

During the 1960s, Donald Hamilton wrote and created an Americanized spy book series showcasing Matt Helm, a smooth and savvy undercover agent working for the United States Government, although which department was never specifically established. Much like Bond, the Helm series was packed with action sequences and a strong, talented spy as the hero. However, when the Hollywood studio system bought the rights to Helm series, they had a different portrayal in mind.

Columbia Pictures acquired the rights to eight of the Matt Helm novels in 1965. The studio and lead producer Irving Allen had intended for the Matt Helm franchise to be more of a spoof on the traditional spy movie standards started by the Bond series. They wanted to produce a tongue-in-cheek comedic take on the franchise, while still garnering the action that movie goers would crave from this genre. Of all of Hollywood's talented leading men, one actor stood out to Irving Allen as the perfect man to play super spy Matt Helm, and that man was Dean Martin.

With his own production company Claude Productions, Martin would embark on a four-picture deal that would solidify his popularity during the 1960s. Martin portrays Matt Helm very

much as a version of his own stage persona; a laid back, tippy crooner that simply wants to relax. The first film of the series was *The Silencers*, which premiered in 1966. Martin is joined by Stella Stevens in an action filled plot to defeat Tung-Tze, an operator under the notorious super villain Big-O. The film is laced with tongue-in-cheek humor, music, and of course plenty of beautiful women. Perhaps the most common theme throughout the film is Helm's love of women, but it is portrayed in a way that brings humor to the Bond image as a "ladies man."

While Martin greatly enjoyed working on this film, critics panned the movie and the reviews were low. However, audiences loved the film, and it was a box office hit. Three additional films were made including *Murder's Row* (1966), *The Ambushers* (1967), and *The Wrecking Crew* (1969). Martin was slated to do a fifth, called *The Ravagers*. However the devastating murder of his co-star Sharon Tate and the series' diminishing box office returns led him to drop out of the franchise for good. In addition, he was tired of making films with such a similar plot and rhythm, and missed making his Westerns, which he enjoyed a great deal more.



Above left: *Death of A Citizen*, first edition paperback (Fawcett Publications, 1960)  
 Above right: *The Ambushers* theatrical release poster (Columbia, 1967)  
 Below: Dean with Ann-Margret and Dino, Desi & Billy in *Murderer's Row* (Columbia, 1966)

Nevertheless, the magic chemistry of humor and music perfected throughout the Matt Helm films would come to serve as the formula for the Bond parody films that would carry on for generations to come.

While the Matt Helm film franchise may have lost popularity in the younger generation over the years, the influence of these films can be most iconically seen in one satirical spy film franchise: *Austin Powers*. Developed by Canadian born actor Mike Meyers, *Austin Powers* is a series of

films that spoof several of the classic James Bond films. While the plots and central elements of these films may come directly from the original Bond franchise, there are several aspects of these films that can be traced to the Matt Helm films and Dean Martin's portrayal of Helm.

For example, *Austin Powers* and Matt Helm both cover as fashion photographers to conceal their true identities as spies. In addition, the overall themes of the "Swingin' 60s" used in the *Austin Powers* films including music, colors, themes, slang, and costumes, can be directly linked back to the designs used in the Helm films. While the Matt Helm films may not have remained as popular as the more modern *Austin Powers* films, the legacy of these films and Dean Martin's performance can not be ignored.

Within this story lies yet another example of how Dean Martin's performance and talent has permeated into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and will continue to impact films for years to come.

Marisa Lavins.



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SAMUEL HOLMES

Choreographed and Co-Directed by  
NICK WINSTON

Designed by  
RYAN DAWSON LAIGHT

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AS  
MOTHER  
GOOSE

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