AN APOLOGY to those of our audience who weren't here last week and thus didn't know about tonight's later starting time, due to an overlapping use of the auditorium. It was an especially unfortunate bit of timing, since tonight's program is unusually long, but it was a fait accompli even before we knew about it. We were asked to start at 8:30, but we're trying for a compromise of 8:15. Then, by eliminating an introduction and cutting the intermission to five minutes, we can get you out by midnight. It's particularly irritating to have to rush a bit in a room that's long and heavy, and would benefit from a little more breathing space.

However, we have to try this later start. If you knock out any of our regulars, please drop me a line c/o the School and I will try to let you know when and if the films are scheduled for any other showings. A reminder: no show next week. We resume on March 12.

1946: Two British films from Daphne Du Maurier works

THE YEARS BETWEEN (Rank-Sydney Box-General Film Distributors, 1946) Directed by Compton Bennett; Produced by Sydney Box; Screenplay by Muriel and Sydney Box from the original play by Daphne du Maurier; Camera, Reg. Wyr. (Bert Stone); 100 mins. (Released in the US by Universal in 1947, cut to 88 mins. Our print is of the full version).

With: Michael Redgrave (Michael Wentworth); Valerie Hobson (Diana Wentworth); Florence Robson (Nanny); Felix Aylmer (Sir Ernest Foster); James McKeehan (Richard Llewellyn); Dulcie Gray (Jill); Edward Rigby (Postman); John Gilpin (Robin Wentworth); Yvonne Owen (Alice); Wylie Watson (Viking); Ena Cannon (Effie); Muriel George (Mrs May); Ernest Butcher (Old Man) and Joss Ackland, Keith Johnson, Boris Reiss, Samuel Hylton, James Hayes, Lorna Thorne, Alan Tilney, David Howlett, Patrick Haggard, John Armstrong, John Merton, Peter Candy, Frank Taylor, Brian Clapson, William Hargan, Joseph Rady, John Ridgeway, Frederick Swanston, John Brown, and William Greaves.

British writers at the end of World War Two all felt that they had to make a "meaningful" (and hopefully commercial) contribution by writing about contemporary Britain, but it was too early for any real perspective to be possible, and in any case du Maurier was best liked for her high drama and romantic escapism. "The Years Between" is superficial and dated, but it is an interesting mirror to at least one of the problems of post-war Britain, namely that of the men coming back and in (some cases) finding that women - even their own wives - had taken over their jobs. Of course, one can see this as a recipe for trouble, and indeed the story looks somewhat too easy as a pair in this film: Director Compton Bennett, fresh from his immediately prior success "The Seventh Veil", loses his momentum rather badly, and Michael Redgrave was in an unfortunate rut, having just played a returning p.o.w. in his immediately prior film, "The Captive Heart". Valerie Hobson's character comes off best, partly because Redgrave's husband is rather an unreasonable bore, and mainly because she had always played bright, intelligent, self-reliant women and in a sense was coating on a well-established image. It's an interesting film, certainly not bad work, but it is a case of "a matter of life and death", as the title puts it. Our print is of the full version, though fully complete, but if its well-used condition results in less than top-grade sound and picture quality, be assured that the like-new print of "Hungry Hill" will make up for it.

--- 5 MINUTE INTERMISSION ---

HUNGRY HILL (Rank-Two Cities-General Film Distributors, 1946) Directed by Brian Desmond Hurst; Produced by William Stewart; Screenplay by Daphne du Maurier and Terence Young, with Francis Craven, from the novel by du Maurier; Camera, Desmond Jackson; 109 mins; released in the U.S. in 1947 by Universal, cut to 92 mins. Our print is of the full version.

With: Margaret Lockwood (Fanny Rose); Dennis Price (Grayshound John); Cecil Parker (Copper John); Michael Denison (Deirdre Brodrick); Jean Simmons (Jane Brodrick); Eileen Herlie (Katherine); F.J. McCormick (Old Tim); Dermot Walsh (Wild Johnnie); Eileen Crowe (Bridget); Siobhan McKenna (Kate Donovan); Peter Murray (Lt. Fox); Arthur Sinclair (Moray Donovan); Dan O'Herlihy (Harry Brodrick); Anthony Wagner (John); Henry Woolf (Dr. Armstrong) and James Robertson Justice, Guy Rolfe, Patrick Holt, Tony Quinn, Hector MacGregor, Eddie Byrne, Julia Lockwood, Seamus Lockwood and Forrest.

Daphne du Maurier here invades Edna Ferber territory with a family saga stretched over some 200 years -- the kind of film where you're tempted to despair because after an hour key characters haven't yet been born; while it's good to be able to see it in its full form, the film does perhaps have two strikes against it. One, it was poorly received at the time because it came right at the end of a group of outstanding British films: "A Matter of Life and Death", "Hue and Cry", "School for Secrets", "Greengrass Danger", "Great Expectations" and "Old Man Out" within a month on either side, and clearly it couldn't compete with them. Secondly, it is the kind of mixture of Gothic romance and Film Noir that requires a top budget -- it should have been big, sprawling, preferably in Technicolor and with lots of location work. Instead, despite a really first-class cast (though the episodic plot defeats the use of a strong leading man like James Mason) it has the look of economy throughout. Too many exteriors are too obviously and very obvious interiors, while the art direction is interesting in itself, the sets themselves don't always convince. A pity, because its cavalanches of disasters, sudden death, feuds and family curses out for a film with the bravura style of "Blanche Fury", and Brian Desmond Hurst is an interesting enough director to have pulled it off had he been given the budget. (Lockwood once claimed that its failure was due to audiences not accepting her in a period role -- apparently forgetting that she had done three such in a row, one of them quite fantastically successful ("Wicked Lady") right before this one. It's all a bit too melodramatic, dismembered and over-plotted in cutimentary intervals, rather like a tv soap opera, so that it lurches rather than flows -- apparently du Maurier did the screenplay herself, albeit with assistance, the blame is at least partially hers. This quality may seem a little underlined tonight, with our length and lateness problem, but as long as you aren't expecting a "Rebecca" or a related film like Ferber's "Come And Get It", you should find it quite enjoyable -- not least for that cast, even though too many of the interesting players get themselves killed off too quickly. -- William K. Everson ---

Program ends approx. (and hopefully) 11:50.