Ben Vereen went out of his way to star in NBC-TV's "A.D."

Commuters who complain about the long distances they must travel to work shouldn't expect any sympathy from Ben Vereen. The Emmy and Tony-winning actor had to travel more than 22,000 miles for two days work in NBC-TV's "A.D.", the epic 12-hour miniseries filmed entirely on location in Tunisia.

Vereen was appearing in Las Vegas when he traveled to North Africa for his role of an Ethiopian nobleman. "We flew from Las Vegas, to New York, to England," he recalls. "Then from England to Tunisia. And then we drove for five hours to the desert where 'A.D.' was shooting. We filmed in 110-degree heat and a windstorm was blowing up. I was there a day and a half and then we drove to another town, waited overnight for a plane and finally flew back to Las Vegas. From one desert to another."

Was the trip worth it? "Absolutely," he says. "'A.D.' is a document and I wanted to be part of it."

Picking up where NBC's acclaimed "Jesus of Nazareth" left off, "A.D." vividly re-creates the turbulent years following the death of Christ, dramatizing the growing conflicts between the early Christians and the mighty Roman Empire.

Ben Vereen is no stranger to Biblical stories. He was once a seminary student, and during the late 1960s he played Judas in the long-running Broadway hit "Jesus Christ Superstar." Other Broadway credits include "Sweet Charity" and "Pippin", for which he won a Tony Award.

Ben Vereen

Vereen received an Emmy nomination for his memorable performance as Chicken George in "Roots." He later headlined the NBC special "Ben Vereen's Roots," which won seven Emmy Awards. He also starred in the weekly series "Ten Speed and Brown Shoe," and he continues to be one of the most popular variety performers in the world.

Richard Roundtree — playing gladiator in real Roman Arena unsettling experience

Richard Roundtree traveled more than 11,000 miles to play the head of a Roman school for gladiators in NBC-TV's 12-hour "A.D." miniseries. It was a journey that also took him back 2,000 years to a time when the killing of human beings was a source of entertainment for the masses.

"A.D." will be telecast Sunday, March 31, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, April 1, 2 and 3 and Thursday, April 4.

Roundtree says it was "freaky" filming at El Jem, Tunisia, in a well-preserved colosseum built by the Romans around 230 A.D. "That was an incredible experience. It was so real. You could walk underneath it and see where the wild animals were kept. And much like the Colosseum in Rome, there were stalls and cages for the gladiators. This was not a set; it was an actual place."

During filming Roundtree says his mind often wandered back to the tumultuous years being recreated in the NBC miniseries. "The realization that people actually sat upstairs and watched people killing each other was freaky. It would be like me as a black person sitting on an authentic slave ship. That's the only thing I can compare it to. Sitting in the stadium you could almost see and feel the blood and carnage. It was perfect for an actor, you didn't have to fake anything."

Roundtree was also fascinated by his character, Serpenius. "He was a native of Namibia, which was conquered by the Romans. Even though he was black, his position as a gladiator instructor made him a respected member of Roman society.

"It was an honor to be a trainer because he had to be the ultimate survivor. Being a gladiator had its element of respect. They were respected for their abilities in the arena, and Serpenius took his job very seriously."

In addition to the authentic setting at El Jem, Roundtree was impressed with the wardrobe provided by "A.D." costume designer Enrico Sabbatini. "I spent a whole day going through the wardrobe, looking at the gladiator equipment and Centurian armament. The swords we used were actually the real weight and size. I was there four weeks, two of which I spent rehearsing." Because of the physical nature of the role he says he was lucky to escape injury. "But I had a lot of soreness because I used muscles that I never used before. It's not often I'm called upon to swing a nine-pound sword or quickly get out of the way of a lion."

Third Annual Kentucky Fried Chicken Gospel Music Competition Underway

Kentucky Fried Chicken is calling for Baltimore and Washington area gospel singers to enter its Third Annual Gospel Music Competition. Launched in 1983, the event has given more than 450 gospel groups, soloists and musicians the opportunity to perform before thousands of people.

In addition, contributions of more than $9,000 will be awarded to churches sponsoring the winning entrants. Trophies will be presented to the performers.

Eight finalists will be chosen to appear on stage at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Concert Hall on Sunday, July 14, during the Competition finale.

The deadline for entering this year's event is **midnight, March 31, 1985.** Interested choirs, ensembles, soloists, and new this year, youth choirs, should submit a 10-minute cassette recording of musical selections along with an official entry form. Selected, qualified, entrants will be invited to perform at one of the May preliminary auditions held at Washington and Baltimore area churches.

Entry forms are available at the following locations:

— Participating Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurants

— Baltimore **AFRO-AMERICAN** Newspaper, 628 N. Eutaw Street, Baltimore.

— WEBB Radio, 2018 Denison Street, Baltimore

— WBGR Radio, 334 N. Charles Street, Baltimore

— WXYV Radio (V103), 8001 Park Heights Avenue, Baltimore

— Discount Record Hut (Next to WYCB Radio), 1344½ G Street, N.W., Washington.

— Washington **AFRO-AMERICAN** Newspaper, 2002—11th Street, N.W., Washington

— **Capital Spotlight** Newspaper, 762 National Press Bldg., Washington

— WUST Radio, 815 V Street N.W., Washington

— WHUR-FM, 529 Bryant Street, N.W., Washington

Or, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN GOSPEL MUSIC COMPETITION, P.O. Box 28604, Washington, D.C. 20005

For additional information, call 202-842-4175.

Capitol Recording artist Lillo Thomas was seen celebrating the news that he will be touring with Eddie Murphy who was at a New York Night spot recently with Lisa Ruffin. They open at Constitution Hall on April 29.

Soap Opera Week

By Kimberly Redmond

Whatever happened to Charita Bauer, the actress who played Bert Bauer, on "The Guiding Light"? I knew she had returned to the soap after an illness, but I haven't seen her in a few months. — B. J., Minocqua, Wis.

Miss Bauer passed away on Feb. 28 after a long battle with lung cancer. She was 62. The actress had portrayed Bert for 35 years. Miss Bauer (the similarity in last names was only a coincidence) began her role in 1950, during the days when "GL" was broadcast on the radio. She continued in the role when the soap came to television in 1952. Miss Bauer played Bert continuously until Dec. 10, 1984. She holds the record for the longest-running TV serial player.

In 1984, the actress had her leg amputated, and this real-life drama was also used as part of the "GL" plot. Both the character and the actress faced the subject with courage, vitality and a sense of humor. In 1983 the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences honored Miss Bauer with its Lifetime Achievement Award for her contributions to the television industry.

Miss Bauer, who will be missed by countless fans, is survived by her father, George, and her son, Michael Crawford, and her daughter-in-law, Lucy, and her 4-year-old grandson, Alexander.

(Have a question about soap operas? Write Kimberly Redmond at 200 Park Ave., Room 602, New York, NY 10166. Questions cannot be answered personally but those of general interest will be answered in future columns.)

The Tube

TV program guide for Baltimore/Washington
Friday, March 29, 1985 to Thursday, April 4, 1985

WEEKDAY DAYTIME REGULARS

DAYTIME

MORNING

—4:55—
13 MOVIE (THU)
—5:00—
5 CMESAT (FRI)
—5:45—
11 DEVOTIONS
—5:55—
20 JIM BAKKER
—6:00—
2 20 MINUTE WORKOUT
4 13 MORNING STRETCH
5 PANORAMA
7 ABC NEWS THIS MORNING
9 CBS EARLY MORNING NEWS
11 LEARNING TO READ (MON, WED, FRI)
11 LEARNING TO DO (TUE, THU)
13 JIMMY SWAGGART
(HBO) MOVIE (TUE)
—6:30—
2 4 NBC NEWS AT SUNRISE
7 11 NEWS
13 CBS EARLY MORNING NEWS
13 GREAT SPACE COASTER
13 FARM DAY
(HBO) MOVIE (THU, FRI)
(HBO) THE EASTER BUNNY IS COMIN' TO TOWN (MON)
(HBO) LIFE ON EARTH (WED)
—6:45—
4 NEWS (MON-THU)
13 A.M. WEATHER
—7:00—
2 4 TODAY
5 GREAT SPACE COASTER
7 13 GOOD MORNING AMERICA
9 13 CBS MORNING NEWS
20 BUGS BUNNY AND FRIENDS
13 INSPECTOR GADGET
13 MARKETING PERSPECTIVES (FRI)
13 INTRODUCTION TO MATHEMATICS (MON, WED)
13 AMERICAN GOVERNMENT SURVEY (TUE, THU)
—7:30—
5 POPEYE AND FRIENDS
26 LILIAS, YOGA AND YOU
13 VOLTRON, DEFENDER OF THE UNIVERSE
13 SESAME STREET
(HBO) MOVIE (MON)
(HBO) FRAGGLE ROCK (WED)
—8:00—
5 FLINTSTONES
26 WOODY WOODPECKER
26 MACNEIL / LEHRER NEWSHOUR
13 FAT ALBERT
(HBO) PUFF THE MAGIC DRAGON (FRI)
(HBO) MOVIE (TUE-THU)
—8:30—
5 TOM AND JERRY
20 POPEYE
13 FLINTSTONES
13 MISTER ROGERS (R)
(HBO) MOVIE (FRI)
—9:00—
2 9 DONAHUE
4 FANTASY ISLAND
5 I LOVE LUCY
7 TIC TAC DOUGH
11 LOVE CONNECTION
11 PEOPLE ARE TALKING
26 W.O.W.!
26 SESAME STREET
13 JAGAEROBICS
13 ERNEST ANGLEY
13 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING
—9:30—
4 SUPER PASSWORD
5 LEAVE IT TO BEAVER
7 JOKERS WILD
13 BODY LANGUAGE
20 ROMPER ROOM
13 TODAY'S SPECIAL
(HBO) HBO COMING ATTRACTIONS (MON)
—10:00—
2 ALICE
4 TIME MACHINE
5 ANDY GRIFFITH
7 LET'S MAKE A DEAL
9 MORNING BREAK
11 $25,000 PYRAMID
11 HOUR MAGAZINE
26 13 700 CLUB
26 SESAME STREET
13 ELECTRIC COMPANY (R)
(HBO) ALL THE RIVERS RUN (FRI)
(HBO) MOVIE (MON-THU)
—10:30—
2 LAVERNE & SHIRLEY
4 SALE OF THE CENTURY
5 BEWITCHED
7 FAMILY FEUD
11 LET'S MAKE A DEAL
13 3-2-1 CONTACT (R)
—11:00—
2 4 WHEEL OF FORTUNE
5 CAROL BURNETT AND FRIENDS
7 13 TRIVIA TRAP
9 11 PRICE IS RIGHT
26 13 MISTER ROGERS (R)
—11:30—
2 4 SCRABBLE
5 RHODA
7 RYAN'S HOPE
9 FAMILY FEUD
20 13 INDEPENDENT NEWS
26 3-2-1 CONTACT (R)
13 VEGETABLE SOUP

AFTERNOON

—12:00—
2 4 7 9 11 13 NEWS
5 PANORAMA
20 FAMILY
26 WRITE COURSE (WED, FRI)
26 FRUGAL GOURMET (MON)
26 PERSONAL FINANCE (TUE, THU)
13 MACNEIL / LEHRER NEWSHOUR
13 BIG VALLEY
13 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING
(HBO) VIDEO JUKEBOX (FRI)
(HBO) THE LAST POLKA (MON)
(HBO) WARNING: MAY BE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH (TUE)
(HBO) MOVIE (WED, THU)
—12:30—
2 4 SEARCH FOR TOMORROW
7 11 LOVING
9 11 YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS
26 NEW LITERACY: AN INTRODUCTION TO COMPUTERS (WED, FRI)
26 NEW YORK'S MASTER CHEFS (MON)
26 CONGRESS: WE THE PEOPLE (TUE, THU)
(HBO) MOVIE (TUE, FRI)
—1:00—
2 4 DAYS OF OUR LIVES
5 13 MOVIE
7 11 ALL MY CHILDREN
20 HOGAN'S HEROES
26 IMAGES (FRI)
26 DINNER AT JULIA'S (MON)
26 MYSTERY! (TUE)
26 FIRING LINE (WED)
26 HARD WINTER (THU)
13 EVENING EXCHANGE
(HBO) MOVIE (MON)
—1:30—
9 11 AS THE WORLD TURNS
20 GILLIGAN'S ISLAND
26 ALL ABOUT TV (FRI)
26 THIS OLD HOUSE (MON)
(HBO) VIDEO JUKEBOX (THU)
—2:00—
2 4 ANOTHER WORLD
7 11 ONE LIFE TO LIVE
26 EYE ON WASHINGTON
26 NOVA (FRI)
26 GREAT DECISIONS (MON)
26 MASTERPIECE THEATRE (TUE)
26 THE LIVING PLANET: A PORTRAIT OF THE EARTH (WED)
26 OPEN MIND (THU)
13 BLACK FORUM (FRI)
13 JUST FOR YOU (MON)
13 HOWARD PERSPECTIVES (TUE)
13 COMMON CENTS (WED)
13 TONY BROWN'S JOURNAL (THU)
(HBO) MOVIE (TUE-THU)
—2:30—
5 HISPANIA (FRI)
9 13 CAPITOL
20 KIDS INCORPORATED (FRI)
26 PETER AND THE MAGIC EGG (MON)
26 DIG (TUE)
26 A FAMILY CIRCUS EASTER (WED)
26 POOCHIE (THU)
26 NEW TECH TIMES (MON)
26 PRESENTE (THU)
26 THIS OLD HOUSE (FRI)
13 LAP QUILTING (MON)
13 AMERICAN INTERESTS (TUE)
13 MOTORWEEK (WED)
13 A HOUSE FOR ALL SEASONS (THU)
—3:00—
2 4 SANTA BARBARA
5 INSPECTOR GADGET
7 13 GENERAL HOSPITAL
9 13 GUIDING LIGHT
20 SUPERFRIENDS (MON-WED, FRI)
20 ROBOTMAN (THU)
26 MISTER ROGERS (R)
26 TODAY'S SPECIAL
26 CAPTAIN CHESAPEAKE / SUPERFRIENDS (FRI)
26 CAPTAIN CHESAPEAKE / ROBOTECH (MON-THU)
26 TEACHING WRITING (FRI)
26 GED (MON, WED)
26 BEGINNINGS (TUE, THU)
(HBO) CULTURE CLUB IN CONCERT (FRI)
(HBO) THE EASTER BUNNY IS COMIN' TO TOWN (MON)
—3:30—
5 FAT ALBERT
20 HEATHCLIFF
26 ELECTRIC COMPANY (R)
26 MISTER ROGERS (R)
13 VOLTRON, DEFENDER OF THE UNIVERSE
—4:00—
2 TIC TAC DOUGH
4 JEOPARDY
5 HE-MAN AND MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE
7 LOVE CONNECTION
9 HOUR MAGAZINE (MON, TUE, THU, FRI)
9 CBS SCHOOLBREAK (WED)
11 SANFORD AND SON (MON-WED, FRI)
11 CBS SCHOOLBREAK (THU)
11 LOVE BOAT (MON, TUE, THU, FRI)
11 ABC AFTERSCHOOL (WED)
20 VOLTRON, DEFENDER OF THE UNIVERSE
26 13 SESAME STREET
13 ELECTRIC COMPANY (R)
(HBO) MOVIE (TUE, THU, FRI)
(HBO) HOCKEY NIGHT (MON)
(HBO) FRAGGLE ROCK (WED)
—4:30—
2 JOKER'S WILD
4 PEOPLE'S COURT
5 BATMAN
7 ANYTHING FOR MONEY
9 JEFFERSONS (MON-WED, FRI)
20 VOLTRON, DEFENDER OF THE UNIVERSE
13 3-2-1 CONTACT (R)
13 SCOOBY DOO
(HBO) LIFE ON EARTH (WED)
—5:00—
2 NEWSCOPE
4 9 NEWS
5 LOVE BOAT
7 EVERY SECOND COUNTS
9 BARNEY MILLER
9 THREE'S COMPANY
20 DUKES OF HAZZARD (FRI)
20 BUGS BUNNY (MON-THU)
20 SESAME STREET
13 NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC (FRI)
13 KUP'S SHOW (MON)
13 FIRING LINE (TUE)
13 WORKING WOMEN (WED)
13 NOVA (THU)
13 FAT ALBERT
13 3-2-1 CONTACT (R)
—5:30—
2 7 11 NEWS
4 TAXI
5 LAVERNE & SHIRLEY (MON-THU)
9 CREATIVE WOMAN (WED)
9 MORK AND MINDY
13 COLORSOUNDS
(HBO) FRAGGLE ROCK (FRI)
(HBO) MOVIE (MON, WED, THU)

Richard Roundtree plays Serpenius, the demanding head instructor at the gladiator school in Rome, in "A.D." airing over five consecutive nights starting Sunday, March 31 on NBC.

FRIDAY

MARCH 29, 1985

DAYTIME SPECIALS

—8:00—
(HBO) PUFF THE MAGIC DRAGON Animated. On a trip to Hanalee, Puff strives to cure a mute boy of his problem by teaching him a lesson in courage. Voice of Burgess Meredith.

—10:00—
(HBO) ALL THE RIVERS RUN Driven apart from her husband after the fire on the Philadelphia, Delie returns to Brenton whose subsequent injury forces Delie to navigate their restored boat for one last chance to make money before the bank forecloses. Sigrid Thornton, John Waters. (Part 4 of 4)

—3:00—
(HBO) CULTURE CLUB IN CONCERT Culture Club performs "Karma Chameleon," "Do You Really Want To Hurt Me?" and "Miss Me Blind" at the Hammersmith Odeon in London, England.

—5:00—
13 NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Hal Holbrook narrates the story of four Americans now living in China: a student, a journalist, a businessman and a teacher.

DAYTIME CHILDREN'S SHOWS

—8:00—
(HBO) PUFF THE MAGIC DRAGON Animated. On a trip to Hanalee, Puff strives to cure a mute boy of his problem by teaching him a lesson in courage. Voice of Burgess Meredith.

—5:30—
(HBO) FRAGGLE ROCK Wembley's on a mission of revenge after Boober scares him, but his plans take a terrifying twist.

DAYTIME MOVIES

—6:30—
(HBO) "The Camel Boy" (1984) Animated. Voices of Barbara Frawley, Ron Haddrick. In the 1920s, an Arabic boy and his grandfather become camel drivers on an adventurous expedition across Australia's Great Victoria Desert.

—8:30—
(HBO) "My Favorite Year" (1982) Peter O'Toole, Jessica Harper. An alcoholic ex-matinee idol has trouble coping with the pressures of a live TV performance during television's golden age. PG

—12:30—
(HBO) "Superman III" (1983) Christopher Reeve, Richard Pryor. A villainous industrial magnate tries to neutralize the Man of Steel by splitting him into his good and evil personalities. PG

—1:00—
5 "Thunder Over The Plains" (1953) Randolph Scott, Lex Barker. Following the Civil War, a military officer is assigned to put a stop to the practice of carpetbagging in the Southwest.
13 "Casanova's Big Night" (1954) Bob Hope, Joan Fontaine. A tailor's apprentice gets into trouble when he masquerades as the great lover Casanova.

—4:00—
(HBO) The Camel Boy (1984) Animated. Voices of Barbara Frawley, Ron Haddrick. In the 1920s, an Arabic boy and his grandfather become camel drivers on an adventurous expedition across Australia's Great Victoria Desert.

EVENING

—6:00—
2 4 7 9 11 13 NEWS
5 WKRP IN CINCINNATI
20 DIFFRENT STROKES
26 3-2-1 CONTACT (R)
26 13 MACNEIL / LEHRER NEWSHOUR
13 STAR TREK
(HBO) MOVIE "My Favorite Year" (1982) Peter O'Toole, Jessica Harper. An alcoholic ex-matinee idol has trouble coping with the pressures of a live TV performance during television's golden age. PG

—6:30—
2 NBC NEWS
5 TAXI
11 CBS NEWS