

## Stand By Me – A Rob Reiner Film

This film is a rerelease as it was first in cinemas during 1986. The rerelease is very poignant as the Director, Rob Reiner, was sadly murdered last year alongside his wife. The film is based on a Stephen King novella, "The Body", and is largely carried in its narrative by child actors. The group from the U3A Cinema Club were all agreed that it was a rewarding watch and would recommend it to others to see.

The plot, which is presented as a flashback, centres on a group of four young people, who have been friends through school but are shortly to move on to separate schools. They agree to look for a body of another young boy, who has reputedly been killed by a train but his body has yet to be found. This could seem rather ghoulish but, in my opinion, the film does not make it so.

The focus is on the individual lives of the four young people and on the interactions between them as they set out from their homes in the town of Castle Rock, without parental permission, in search of the body. The four characters are Chris (River Phoenix), who has a reputation for fearlessness, Teddy (Corey Feldman), who impresses as being unstable having been physically abused by his traumatised Vietnam veteran father, Vern (Jerry O'Connell), who is clumsy and the occasional cause of hilarity on the journey, and Gordie (Wil Wheaton), the sensitive one, who is renowned amongst the group for the brilliance, in their opinion, of his storytelling.

This group are in conflict in Castle Rock with an older group of boys. The latter are led by Ace (Keiffer Sutherland) and their behaviour throughout the film could easily be described as sociopathic as they appear to be without any form of morality. However, in the final analysis they are outthought and outfought by the previously timid Gordie. The defeat of Ace and his pals provides a sense of justice being fulfilled for the younger boys but as a viewer there is anxiety as to what reprisals may occur once they are all back in Castle Rock.

There are a number of amusing, although potentially dangerous adventures, during their walk to find the body, including having to run for their lives from a train, which,



although the boys could be seen, appeared to have no intention of stopping. The fortunate outcome from each of these experiences serves to bring them even closer as a group. The film highlights the emotional difficulties that adolescents can face as each one has an issue in their life which they clearly find difficulty in coping with. The adult world is frequently presented as cruel and damaging to the lives of young people.

The film includes a film within it of one of Gordie's storytelling episodes which sees the much maligned young person, the central character, getting his own back effectively and amusingly on those who have taunted him.

The acting is exceptional across all the characters portrayed and, as can be expected of a film entitled "Stand By Me", has a very enjoyable soundtrack.