

Rod Serling Notes

Rodman Edward Serling was born on December 25, 1924 in Syracuse, New York and was raised in Binghamton, New York. He lived there from 1926 to 1943. with his parents Esther and Samuel Lawrence Serling along with his brother, Robert who was born in 1918. Serling attended Binghamton Central High School.

After high school, he served in the Army from 1943 to 1946 under the command of General Joseph May "Joe" Swing and Col. Orin D. "Hard Rock" Haugen. Many of his future writings about World War II were based on his experiences from these years in the service.

Next, Serling volunteered at WNYC in New York as an actor and writer in the summer of 1946. He met Carolyn (Carol) Kramer while working together on a radio broadcasts at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio in 1946. The two married in 1948.

He wrote his first television dramas for *The Storm*, a live anthology from WKRC-TV in Cincinnati 1951 and 1952.

By 1954, Serling and his family had moved to New York. On January 12, 1955, the nationwide *Kraft Television Theatre* televised a program based on Serling's 72nd script. The script was titled *Patterns*. To Serling, it was just another script and he missed the first "live" broadcast. He and his wife hired a babysitter for the night and told her, "no one would call because we had just moved to town."

Patterns was instant success. Serling's script exposed the dynamics of the business world and earned Serling his first of six Emmy Awards for dramatic writing.

When *Patterns* returned on February 9, 1955, it was once again performed live, an unprecedented event. This was the first time a television drama was repeated due to popularity.

After the repeat performance, Serling received 23 bids to write teleplays, several screenplay offers (he accepted two, one of which was the adaptation of *Patterns*), 14 requests for interviews, two luncheon invitations from Broadway producers and two bids from book publishers. His other memorable television plays include *Requiem For A Heavyweight* which aired on October 11, 1956 on *Playhouse 90* starring Jack Palance; *The Comedian* that aired on February 14, 1957, also on *Playhouse 90* and *The Time Element* which aired on November 24, 1958 on the Westinghouse Desilu Playhouse.

Although *The Time Element* is not the pilot episode of *The Twilight Zone*, it was this Rod Serling production that eventually led to *The Twilight Zone* series. It proved to be very popular with viewers and led CBS to pursue a new series with Serling.

On March 27, 1956, a feature-length film version of *Patterns* was released. The film featured an expanded script by Serling. Van Heflin replaced Richard Kiley in the role of Fred Staples.

Everett Sloane (Mr. Ramsie) - made his New York stage debut in 1928. Sloane took a Wall Street job as a stockbroker's runner, but when his salary was cut in half after the stock market crash of 1929, he began to supplement his income with radio work. Sloane's radio work led him to be hired by Orson Welles to become part of his Mercury Theatre.

Sloane made his Broadway debut in 1935 in George Abbott's comedy, *Boy Meets Girl*. His Broadway theater career ended in 1960 with *From A To Z*, a revue for which he wrote several songs.

In 1941, Sloane played Mr. Bernstein in Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane*. He also appeared in *The Lady From Shanghai* and *Prince Of Foxes*.

Sloane also worked extensively on television. He appeared in Walt Disney's *Zorro* series also in episodes of *Bonanza* and *Rawhide*. Other television appearances include *The Asphalt Jungle*, *The Dick Tracy Show*, *Jonny Quest*, *The Twilight Zone*, *Perry Mason* and *Voyage To The Bottom Of The Sea*. Additionally, he wrote the unused lyrics to "The Fishin' Hole", the theme song for *The Andy Griffith Show*. At the time of his appearance in *Patterns*, Everett Sloane was only 45 years old.

Richard Kiley (Fred Staples) - is best known for his theatrical career in which he twice won the Tony Award for Best Actor in a Musical for *Man Of La Mancha* and *Kismet*.

Kiley won three Emmy Awards and two Golden Globe Awards for his work in television in *The Thorn Birds*, *A Year In The Life* and *Picket Fences*. His other television work included *Ally McBeal*, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, *Columbo*, *Hawaii Five-O* and *Gunsmoke*. His final acting role was in the 1999 television movie *Blue Moon*.

Ed Begley (Andy Sloane) - began his career as a Broadway and radio actor while in his teens appearing in the hit musical *Going Up* on Broadway in 1917 and in London the following year.

He also starred in the 1950's radio program *Richard Diamond, Private Detective*. By the late 1940's, Begley began appearing regularly in supporting film roles.

Begley won an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his performance in *Sweet Bird of Youth*. He also appeared in *12 Angry Men*, *Odds Against Tomorrow* and *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*. He was nominated for an Emmy Award in a television adaptation of *Inherit the Wind*. He is the father of actor Ed Begley Jr.

His other television work included appearances on *The Virginian*, *Bonanza*, *The Fugitive*, *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, *The Invaders*, *The Wild Wild West*, *My Three Sons*, *Wagon Train* and *Going My Way* with Gene Kelly.

June Dayton (Fran Staples) - was born Mary June Wetzel. She used her hometown of Dayton for her professional name.

Her Broadway credits include *The Ivy Green*, *Tenting Tonight* and *Lovely Me*. She worked in summer stock theater for several years and in 1951, she toured in Australia with a production of *The Moon Is Blue*.

Dayton appeared as a guest star in episodes of *Gunsmoke*, *The Investigators*, *The Fugitive*, *The F.B.I.*, *Barnaby Jones*, *Dennis The Menace*, *Quincy, M.E.* and *Perry Mason*. Her film appearances include *Twilight of Honor*, *One Man's Way*, *Tora! Tora! Tora!*, *Something For Joey*, *Deadman's Curve* and *The Other Side of The Mountain - Part 2*.

Elizabeth Wilson (Marge Fleming) - her career spanned nearly 70 years performing roles in film and television. In 1972, she won the Tony Award for Best Featured Actress in *Sticks and Bones*.

Wilson made her screen debut in the 1955 film adaptation of *Picnic*. Her other films include *The Birds*, *The Graduate*, *Catch-22*, *The Day Of The Dolphin*, *9 To 5*, *Regarding Henry*, *The Addams Family* and *Quiz Show*. Her final film role was in *Hyde Park On Hudson*.

Her television credits include *Kraft Television Theatre*, *The United States Steel Hour*, *East Side/West Side*, *Dark Shadows*, *The Secret Storm*, *Another World*, *All In The Family*, *Murder, She Wrote* and *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*.

Wilson was inducted into the American Theater Hall of Fame in 2006.

Elizabeth Montgomery (Ann Evans) - will always be remembered as the good witch Samantha Stephens on *Bewitched*. The program earned her five Primetime Emmy Award nominations and four Golden Globe Award nominations.

Montgomery made her television debut in her father's series *Robert Montgomery Presents*. In October 1953, she debuted on Broadway starring in *Late Love*. Her next debut was in films with Otto Preminger in *The Court-Martial Of Billy Mitchell*.

Her early career consisted of starring roles and appearances in live television dramas and series, such as *Studio One*, *Kraft Television Theater*, *Johnny Staccato*, *Burke's Law*, *The Twilight Zone*, *The Eleventh Hour*, *Wagon Train*, *Boris Karloff's Thriller* and *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*.

She was nominated at the 13th Primetime Emmy Awards for her portrayal of Rusty Heller in a 1960 episode of *The Untouchables*, playing opposite David White, who later portrayed Larry Tate on *Bewitched*.

Montgomery was featured in a role as a socialite in *Johnny Cool*, along with the comedy *Who's Been Sleeping in My Bed?* with Dean Martin and Carol Burnett. After her appearance on *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, Alfred Hitchcock had her in mind to play the sister-in-law of Sean Connery, who sees herself as a rival to the troubled heroine in the film *Marnie*, but Montgomery was unavailable.

In June of 2005, a bronze statue of Montgomery as Samantha Stephens was erected in Salem, Massachusetts. A star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame was presented in honor of Montgomery's work on television on January 4, 2008. The location of the star is 6533 Hollywood Blvd.

Joanna Roos (Miss Lanier) - made her professional theatrical debut in May of 1921 in a performance of *The Harlequinade* at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York City. Some of her other Broadway credits included *Peer Gynt*, *Orpheus Descending*, *Joan of Lorraine*, *The Trojan Women*, *Abe Lincoln In Illinois*, *Daughters of Atreus*, *Black Widow*, *Panic* and *Little Women*.

She starred as Elizabeth Stallworth in "The House," a 30-minute episode of the mystery anthology series *The Web*, broadcast on live television airing on August 29, 1954. In 1958, Roos was a member of the cast of *Today Is Ours*, a drama on NBC Television.

Her other works in television include *As The World Turns*, *Decoy*, *Naked City*, *The Defenders* and *The Edge Of Night*.

Night Gallery

The pilot episode aired on November 8, 1969. The series began the following year on December 16, 1970. It aired up through June 10, 1973. There was a total of 47 episodes in this series.

According to one of the series directors John Badham, each episode was filmed in 2 1/2 to 3 days on a very tight budget.

The *Night Gallery* theme song was created by Gil Melle with his homemade synthesizer instruments. Intermodulation was the key element his Melle's composition.

Jack Laird had complete creative control over the show. Unknowingly, Rod Serling did not have that authority according to his contract. Serling wanted a more dramatic program as opposed to Laird adding comical moments in some episodes. By the end of the series run, Serling was very bitter as he had basically no creative control as he had on *The Twilight Zone*.

REFERENCES

Television Heaven website

METV Website

Cincinnati Enquirer website: John Kiesewetter

Internet Movie Data Base

Wikipedia