

Annie Oakley

Annie Oakley was born Phoebe Ann (Annie) Mosey on August 13, 1860, in what is now Willowdell in Darke County, Ohio. She was the sixth of nine children. Annie began trapping before the age of seven plus shooting and hunting by the age of eight.

Annie soon became well known throughout the region. Sometime between 1875 and 1881, the Baughman & Butler shooting act was being performed in Cincinnati. Traveling show marksman Frank E. Butler placed a \$100 bet per side with Cincinnati hotel owner Jack Frost that Butler could beat any local fancy shooter. Frost arranged a shooting match between Butler and teenage Annie Mosey saying, "The last opponent Butler expected was a five-foot-tall young girl named Annie." After missing on his 25th shot, Butler lost the match and the bet. He soon began courting Annie and they were married on June 20, 1882 according to the certificate on file with the Archives of Ontario Registration Number 49594. Together, they joined *Buffalo Bill's Wild West* in 1885. Oakley, the stage name she adopted when she and Frank began performing together, is believed to have been taken from the city's neighborhood of Oakley, where they resided. Others believe she took on the name because that was the name of the man who had paid her train fare when she was a child.

From 1892 to 1904, Oakley and Butler made their home in Nutley, New Jersey. During this period, Annie promoted the service of women in combat operations for the United States armed forces. She wrote a letter to President William McKinley on April 5, 1898, "offering the government the services of a company of 50 'lady sharpshooters' who would provide their own arms and ammunition should the U.S. go to war with Spain."

In 1901, Oakley was badly injured in a train accident, but recovered after temporary paralysis and five spinal operations. She left the Buffalo Bill show and in 1902 began an acting career

in a stage play written especially for her, *The Western Girl*. Oakley played the role of Nancy Berry who used a pistol, a rifle and rope to outsmart a group of outlaws. Throughout her career, it is believed that Annie Oakley taught more than 15,000 women how to use a gun. In 1894, Oakley and Butler performed in Edison's Kinetoscope film *The "Little Sure Shot of the Wild West,"* an exhibition of rifle shooting at glass balls which was filmed November 1, 1894 in Edison's Black Maria studio. In 1912, the Butlers built a brick ranch-style house in Cambridge, Maryland. Now known as the Annie Oakley House it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1996.

Annie Oakley died in Greenville, Ohio at the age of 66 on November 3, 1926. Butler was so grieved by her death that he stopped eating and died 18 days later in Michigan.

Annie Oakley was portrayed by Barbara Stanwyck in the 1935 film titled *Annie Oakley*. The 1946 Broadway musical *Annie Get Your Gun* with Ethel Merman and the 1950 film of the same name with Betty Hutton were among the many tributes to Annie Oakley. Gail Davis starred in the television series from 1954 to 1957. In the years since then, Mary Martin, Dolores Gray, Evie Hayes, Barbara Eden, Bernadette Peters, Susan Lucci, Cheryl Ladd, Lucie Arnaz, Jamie Lee Curtis, Reba McEntire, Elizabeth Berridge and Sarah Strange have all played the role of Annie Oakley in various film, stage and television productions.

Treasure Map - Aired Sunday, December 30, 1956.

Annie Oakley aired in syndication from January 1954 to February 1957. A total of 81 black-and-white 25 minute episodes were produced. The ABC network aired daytime reruns of the series

on Saturdays and Sundays from 1959 to 1960 and again from 1964 to 1965.

Many of the exterior locations were filmed at Alabama Hills in Lone Pine, Iverson Ranch in Chatsworth and Melody Ranch in Newhall, all in California.

Gail Davis - was born Betty Jeanne Grayson on October 5, 1925 in Little Rock, Arkansas. While she was at the University of Texas at Austin in 1945, she met and married her first husband, Bob Davis. From September 1950 through September 1954, she appeared in 15 episodes of *The Gene Autry Show*, a weekly television series of western adventures. It was Gene Autry who suggested that Betty Jeanne change her name to Gail Davis. She was posthumously inducted into the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame in Fort Worth, Texas On October 28, 2004.

Quotes from Gail Davis:

On auditioning for the title role in *Annie Oakley* (1954): "They came up with the idea of a western series for a girl - it'd never been done before. So they ran a contest throughout the United States, trying to find someone who could ride and shoot and act. I got very upset because this was right down my alley, really a part I wanted. I felt it was me. I went to talk to the producer, Mandy Schaefer and he said no. So, I went home and put on my bluejeans, a gingham shirt, put freckles on my nose and put my hair in pigtails and I walked back in to Mandy's office and said, "I think I should play the part". He said, "You got enough courage to do this - let's give you a test". We did the test and I guess I passed. I've been Annie ever since."

In 1982, she told a reporter "I tried to find other acting work, but I was so identified as Annie Oakley that directors would say, 'Gail, I'd like to hire you, but you re going to have to wait a few years,

dye your hair and cut off your pigtails.' Directors just couldn't envision me in a sexy part or playing a heavy. I was always going to be Annie Oakley. So, as they say, I retired."

Jimmy Hawkins (Tagg) - began his motion picture career at the age of two and has appeared in films as *It's A Wonderful Life*. During the 1950's and 1960's, he was a regular on television programs as *The Charlie Ruggles Show*, *Annie Oakley*, *The Donna Reed Show* and *The Adventures Of Ozzie and Harriet*. He has been married to Lara Parker since 1985. She starred as the witch Angelique in the original *Dark Shadows* television series.

Brad Johnson (Sheriff Lofty Craig) - The majority of his screen credits are in westerns such as *The Range Rider*, *Death Valley Days*, *Maverick* and *The Life and Legend Of Wyatt Earp*. In the late 1960's, he turned down offers to move to Europe and act in spaghetti westerns. Instead, he opted for a career in real estate.

Shelley Fabares (according to Shelley Fabares, her name is pronounced Fah-ber-ray) (Prudy Warren) - She graduated from North Hollywood High School in 1961. Fabares made her acting debut at the age of 3. At the age of 10, she made her first appearance on television in an episode of *Letter to Loretta*, "The Clara Schuman Story" in 1954.

In 1958, Fabares landed the role of Mary Stone in the long-running family sitcom *The Donna Reed Show* which ran until 1966.

Her popularity led to a recording contract and two "Top 40" hits, including the number one hit *Johnny Angel* in 1962.

Fabares was also Elvis Presley's leading lady in *Girl Happy* in 1965 for MGM. She had a regular role on *The Brian Keith Show* from 1972 to 1974 which lasted for 47 episodes and then had a regular role on *Forever Fernwood*. In 1989, Fabares won the role of Christine Armstrong Fox on the ABC sitcom *Coach*. It was a hit that lasted until 1997. From 2004 to 2011, she produced the Screen Actors Guild Awards.

Leonard Penn (Jeff Warren) - was known for his work in film serials and bit parts in major films. Penn appeared in 81 films and 27 television productions between 1937 and 1960. He also appeared in six Broadway-theatre productions in New York City between 1934 and 1941. He is probably best remembered for his role of Ranger Griff on *Rocky Jones, Space Ranger*.

Glenn Strange (Ernie Barker) - taught himself the fiddle and guitar at a young age then started performing at local functions as a teen. Strange would play extra or bit roles for a number of years in B Western and serials in the 1930's.

His massive build helped him break into the Universal horror picture genre of the 1940s. Boris Karloff had grown weary of his Frankenstein creature and abandoned the role. Strange was the perfect replacement for the job and made his monstrous debut with *House of Frankenstein* in 1944.

It was Glenn Strange who played the creature in the comedy classic *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* in 1948 as part of the monstrous trio of Bela Lugosi's Dracula and Lon Chaney Jr.'s Wolf Man.

He finished his career with 12 years in the role as Sam the bartender on the classic *Gunslinger* series from 1962 until 1973.

Lane Bradford (Hardy Peel) - was best known on-screen in the 1940's and 1950's for playing western badmen. He was the stuntman for Bill Elliott in *Bullets For Bandits* in 1942 and performed one of the greatest stunts of all time in western films underneath a team of hitched horses. Bradford retired to Hawaii after his last film appearance in 1968 and learned to play the guitar and ukulele.

House Peters, Jr. (Sully Martin) - served in the U.S. Army Air Corps' Air Sea Rescue section as a small-boat operator during World War II. From the late 1940s through the early 1960s, he worked in both movies and television playing soldiers, police detectives and western outlaws. House was also the original Mr. Clean in a series of television commercials. He retired from show business after his recurring role as Sheriff Jeff Simmons on *Lassie* ended in 1965. From there, he went into the real estate profession in the San Fernando Valley in southern California.

Bob Woodward (Bill Edwards) - was a western small part actor and stuntman as an expert rider and coach driver. Woodward was an inductee into the Stuntmen's Hall of Fame. He could be seen on *The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp*, *Tales of Wells Fargo*, *Riverboat*, *Have Gun-Will Travel*, *Death Valley Days* plus many other television programs.

Hopalong Cassidy

Hopalong Cassidy is a fictional cowboy created in 1904 by the author Clarence E. Mulford, who wrote a series of short stories and novels based on the character. Mulford portrayed him as rude, dangerous and rough-talking. He was shot in the leg during a gun fight which caused him to walk with a little "hop", hence the nickname.

From the 1930's to the 1950's, Hopalong Cassidy was associated with actor William Boyd, who portrayed Cassidy first in a 66 films from 1935 to 1948. Later, he continued in radio and a TV series, both of which lasted until 1952. Boyd's portrayal of Cassidy was nothing like the character Mulford created. Instead, he was a clean-cut, sarsaparilla-drinking hero who never shot first. The plots of the film, radio and TV series were generally not taken from Mulford's writings.

Filming Location:

Walker Ranch - 19152 Placerita Canyon Road, Newhall, California, USA

Scenes from other television series such as *Annie Oakley*, *The Cisco Kid*, *Adventures of Wild Bill Hickok* and *The Roy Rogers Show* were also filmed at this location.

The show ranked number 7 in the 1949 Nielsen ratings, number 9 in the 1950–1951 season and number 28 in 1951–1952. The success of the show inspired television westerns such as *The Range Rider*, *Tales of the Texas Rangers*, *Annie Oakley*, *The Gene Autry Show*, and *The Roy Rogers Show*.

Hoppy's white horse was named Topper

Tricky Fingers - Aired April 2, 1954

William Boyd - He went to Hollywood in 1919 and already had gray hair. His first role was in 1920 as an extra in Cecil B. DeMille's *Why Change Your Wife?*. In 1935, he was offered the lead role in Hopalong Cassidy. He changed the original fiction character to its opposite, making sure that "Hoppy" didn't smoke, drink, chew tobacco or swear.

In 1948 Boyd, bought the rights to all his pictures just as television was looking for Saturday morning Western entertainment. He marketed all sorts of "Hoppy" products (lunch boxes, toy guns, cowboy hats, etc.) and received royalties from comic books, radio and records. He retired to Palm Desert, California, in 1953. He was married five times with his last marriage lasting 35 years.

Boyd turned down a chance to appear on *The Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson in the mid-1960's because he didn't want the people to see him as an old man. He was 70 years old at that time.

He appears as Hopalong Cassidy, with Topper the Horse, on a 44¢ USA commemorative postage stamp in the Early TV Memories issue honoring Hopalong Cassidy. The stamp was issued on August 11, 2009.

Edgar Buchanan (Red Connors) - After studying at the University of Oregon, he followed in his father's footsteps and became a dentist, graduating from North Pacific Dental College. From 1929 to 1937, he practiced oral surgery in Eugene, Oregon. He then moved his practice to Altadena, California. Buchanan gave up dentistry at the age of 36 to become an actor, making his film debut in 1939. He turned the dental practice over to his wife who was also a dentist. Buchanan is best known for television roles in *Hopalong Cassidy*, *Judge Roy Bean* and *Petticoat Junction*.

Mark Dana (Harry Keller) - His two most memorable roles were with Bel Air Productions: The villain in *Hot Cars* and the next year in *Pharaoh's Curse* as the hero. His other television credits include *The Life and Legend Of Wyatt Earp* and *The F. B. I.*

Marjorie Lord (Adele Keller) - Her first job was as a 17-year-old replacement on Broadway in *The Old Maid* starring Judith Anderson in 1935.

She met actor John Archer after they appeared together in the stage production of *The Male Animal* and married at the end of 1941.

Freelancing from the late 1940's on, Marjorie was the co-star or second lead in several films. Moving into television, Marjorie had guest parts on such shows as *Racket Squad*, *The Adventures of Kit Carson*, *Hopalong Cassidy*, *The Loretta Young Show* and *Wagon Train*.

In 1957, she was cast as the second wife of widower/entertainer Danny Thomas in the comedy hit *The Danny Thomas Show*. She lucked into the role when Danny's "first wife" (played by actress Jean Hagen) asked to leave the series and the writer had her character die. Marjorie played Danny's wife for seven more seasons.

Marjorie published her memoir, "A Dance and a Hug" in 2005.

Stanley Andrews (Albert Biggs - banker) - was familiar on early television as "The Old Ranger" on *Death Valley Days*. Between 1931 and 1936 he was the voice of Daddy Warbucks on the *Little Orphan Annie* radio show. He was often seen in films as western lawmen and army officers.

The Feud - Aired October 28, 1952

Steve Darrell (Neil Croft) - In a film and television that lasted for nearly 30 years and 161 credits, Darrell appeared in such films as *Angels With Dirty Faces*, *Adventures Of Frank and Jesse James* and *Winchester 73*. In television, his credits include *The Gene Autry Show*, *The Cisco Kid*, *The Lone Ranger* and *Annie Oakley*.

Lucia Carroll (Nancy Croft) - Prior to her film career she worked as a John Powers model in New York. She was under contract to Warner Brothers from 1940. During her 16 year career and over 30 credits, Carroll was best known for *The Nurse's Secret* in 1941, *Captains Of The Clouds* in 1942 and *Always A Bride* in 1940.

Harold Goodwin (John Emery) - Started in silent films as a young man. Played a foil to Buster Keaton in several of his classic shorts and feature films, including *College* in 1927 and *The Cameraman* in 1928. He went on to be a regular in Keaton's comic showcases on television during the early 1950's.

Hugh Beaumont (Hank Scofield) - attended and played football at the University of Chattanooga in Tennessee, but left when his position on the football team was changed. He later attended the University of Southern California (USC) and graduated with a Master of Theology degree.

In addition to being an ordained minister in his early vocation, he also portrayed clergymen as an actor on television and in films such as *The Lone Ranger* and *Crossroads*, *The Member Of The Wedding* and *Washington Story*.

Beaumont also wrote and directed several episodes of his famous series *Leave It To Beaver*, including the final, retrospective episode, *Leave It To Beaver: Family Scrapbook*. His portrayal of Ward Cleaver ranked #28 in TV Guide's list of the "50 Greatest TV Dads of All Time" in the June 20, 2004 issue.

He retired from show business in the late 1960s, launching a second career as a Christmas-tree farmer in Minnesota.

REFERENCES

Wikipedia

Internet Movie Data Base

Western Clippings website: Characters and Heavies by Boyd Magers