



Hollywood: Her Story August 2020 ENewsletter *Gone with the Wind*

The press surrounding the recent passing of Olivia de Havilland (age 104) constantly evokes the 1939 blockbuster *Gone with the Wind* (GWTW) for which she received a nomination for the Best Supporting Actress Oscar. She didn't, however, take that Oscar home. It went to her co-star, Hattie McDaniel, the first African American to win an Oscar. All together, the movie received 8 Academy Awards out of its total 13 nominations. Let's learn about some of the many women associated in some way with this classic movie.



Talent scout and agent **Kay Brown Barrett** was representing producer David Selznick when she discovered Margaret Mitchell's novel, *Gone with the Wind*. Barrett believed it would make a good movie and brought it to his attention. Selznick wasn't interested in making "another Civil War movie" but eventually she prevailed. She said, "We heard a lot about the book before it was published, but no one could get their hands on a copy. Leland Hayward, the agent, said he could steal me one. Of course, Miss [Edna] Ferber knew nothing about this. I loved what I read and RKO gave me the go-ahead to buy. How do you buy the rights to a purloined book? Leland and I, we did it." Among the clients whose careers she influenced or who she represented were Ingrid Bergman, Laurence Olivier, Alfred Hitchcock, Patricia Neal and Lillian Hellman.



Barrett lobbied successfully for Vivien Leigh to be cast as Scarlett O'Hara and her instincts were right. **Vivien Leigh** won the Best Actress Oscar for her performance as Scarlett O'Hara in GWTW. A British stage and film actress, Leigh won another Oscar for her performance as Blanche in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Although she was considered a difficult actress to work with, she has been named as the 16th greatest female movie star of classic Hollywood cinema by the American Film Institute.



Olivia de Havilland, a British actress like Vivien Leigh, was nominated for Best Supporting Actress for her performance in GWTW. One of the leading actresses of her time, de Havilland appeared in 49 films during her career. She and her sister Joan Fontaine are the only sisters to have won major acting Academy Awards and the only sisters to have won any Academy Awards. de Havilland was nominated for a total of five Oscars winning Best Actress Oscars in 1947 for *To Each His Own* and in 1950 for *The Heiress*. She was honored as a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

Stuntwomen **Hazel Hash Warp** and **Lila Finn** performed stunts for Vivien Leigh in GWTW. **Warp** stunt doubled for Leigh in the horse-riding scenes and fell down the steps for her. Of that fall Warp said, "I was black and blue for a while. But I knew how to fall. The director said I spoiled them because I knew what to do." **Lila Finn** drove a horse-drawn carriage through the burning warehouses of the railroad depot during the escape from Atlanta scene in GWTW. She was an actress and athlete in addition to being a stuntwoman, winning a silver medal in volleyball at the 1959 Pan American Games. Her film career spanned 60 years during which she worked on more than 100 films. Finn was the founding president of the Stuntwomen's Association of Motion Pictures and helped found the Screen Actors Guild.

Women in front of and behind the camera make the movies that we all welcome into our hearts and homes. Women across all the areas of moviemaking from actress to animator, editor to stuntwoman,

costume designer to screenwriter, producer to director have contributed to the success of the movie industry since its founding in the 1890s. Help us celebrate these women who are written into movie history in *Hollywood: Her Story*.

Jill S.Tietjen and Barbara Bridges

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