



Hollywood: Her Story April 2024 ENewsletter Movies Featuring Grandparents

In honor of co-author Barbara Bridges becoming a grandmother, in this month's newsletter we feature some movies in which grandparents play a significant role.



The 1957 movie *An Affair to Remember* is considered to be one of the most romantic movies of all time by the American Film Institute. It stars **Deborah Kerr** who falls in love with a man aboard a transatlantic ocean liner. He takes her to meet his grandmother in France, who sings his praises. Through a series of events and mishaps, the couple eventually unite. Kerr was nominated six times for the Academy Award for Best Actress, becoming the first person from Scotland to be nominated for any acting Oscar. Her nominations include: *Edward, My Son* (1950); *From Here to Eternity* (1954); *The King and I* (1957); *Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison* (1958); *Separate Tables* (1959); and *The Sundowners* (1961). She is tied with **Thelma Ritter** and **Amy Adams** as the actresses with the second most nominations without winning, surpassed only by **Glenn Close**, who has been nominated eight times without winning. In 1994, Glenn Close presented Kerr with the Honorary Oscar for lifetime achievement with a citation recognizing her as "an

artist of impeccable grace and beauty, a dedicated actress whose motion picture career has always stood for perfection, discipline and elegance".



The Princess Diaries (2001) tells the story of an American teenager, Mia Thermopolis, being raised by a single mother. Mia learns that she is the heiress to a European throne. The kingdom's reigning queen, who is her paternal grandmother, provides the teenager with instruction and guidance as to royalty and the obligations thereof ("princess lessons"). This movie stars **Anne Hathaway** in her feature film debut. Hathaway grew up in New Jersey and began her acting career as a teenager. She has more than 50 film credits, has won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress (*Les Misérables*, 2013), been nominated for Best Actress (*Rachel Getting Married*, 2009), and has won a Primetime Emmy. An activist and a person who has been very transparent about her mental health, Hathaway said, "I believe I've always been a big believer in equality. No one has ever been able to tell me I couldn't do

something because I was a girl." Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire, British actress, singer, and dancer **Julie Andrews** starred as the grandmother. Andrews has spent almost seven decades in the entertainment industry and during that time has won a Best actress Oscar (*Mary Poppins*, 1965) and been nominated twice more – *The Sound of Music* (1966) and *Victor/Victoria* (1983). She has won two Emmys, three Grammys, and has been nominated for three Tonys. Andrews has written many books, including a number of children's books with her daughter, Emma Walton Hamilton.



In the 2012 film *Parental Guidance*, the grandparents are asked to come look after their three grandchildren while their helicopter parents are out of town at a convention. Singer, comedienne, and actress **Bette Midler** starred as the grandmother. She has been nominated for two Oscars – *The Rose* (1980) and *For the Boys* (1992), won three Grammys, three Emmys, and two Tonys. Midler has also received the Kennedy Center Honors. The "Divine Miss M" majored in drama in college in Hawaii and appeared as an extra in movies as early as 1966. After moving to New York, she appeared in off-off-Broadway plays and honed her skills at the Continental Baths, a gay bathhouse. In 1970, she became friends with pianist (and her sometimes accompanist) Barry Manilow, who also appeared at the Continental Baths. He produced her first album, *The Divine Miss M*, in 1972. The album reached

the Top Ten, was certified Platinum, and won her a Grammy for Best New Artist. Her first starring role in a film was *The Rose*, which resulted in an Academy Award nomination for Best Actress. The film's soundtrack went double platinum. Stage, television, and film actress **Marisa Tomei** is one of the set of helicopter parents in the movie. Tomei won the Oscar for Best Supporting Actress for *My Cousin Vinny* (1993). She has received additional nominations in the same category for *In the Bedroom* (2002) and *The Wrestler* (2009). Tomei has become a familiar face to the new generation of Spider-Man fans as she plays the role of May Parker, the aunt of Peter Parker, Spider-Man.



Maggie Smith plays the grandmother, Violet Crawley, in the television and film sensation *Downton Abbey* which follows the exploits of the Crawley family. The 2019 film focuses on 1927 and a royal visit to the Crawley's estate in Yorkshire. Smith is a British acting icon and a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire. From 2001 to 2011, she gained significant international recognition and acclaim for playing Professor Minerva McGonagall in the *Harry Potter* movies. Smith won her first Best Actress Oscar in 1970 for *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*. She won again in 1979 for *California Suite* and has four additional acting Oscar nominations. Her career has lasted for more than seven decades on both the stage and on film. She has won the "Triple Crown of Acting" by winning Oscars, Emmys, and a Tony.

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*.

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