

# Lillian Gish is still going strong at 93

## Entertainment

### ASK DICK KLEINER



DICK KLEINER

By Dick Kleiner

**Q.** Since George Burns is the oldest actor still acting, who is the oldest actress still acting today? How old will Mr. Burns be this year? — K.M.M., Point of Rocks, Md.

**A.** George Burns turned 94 in January, and he hopefully has a long way to go. I imagine you'd have to say that Lillian Gish, at 93, is the oldest well-known actress still going — but others in the race are Judith Anderson (92), Molly Picon (91), Marlene Dietrich (88), Mildred Dunnock (86) and Claudette Colbert and Helen Hayes, who are both 84. Greta Garbo, who hadn't acted in nearly 50 years, died in April at the age of 84.



Lillian Gish



Janis Paige

**Q.** Please settle an argument between my brother and me. He says Alice Cooper is the grow-up Tony Dow, who was Wally on "Leave It to Beaver." No bet on this — just my sanity. — J.A.J., Galion, Ohio.

**A.** You are sane. That old rumor has been kicking around ever since Alice was a little girl or boy, or whatever he was. No, Tony Dow didn't grow into Alice. Who did? Vincent Damon Furnier — he was born in Detroit in 1948.

**Q.** I've always been a big fan of Oliver Reed. I'm puzzled that he's never really made it BIG. Can you explain that? — K.S.A., Flagstaff, Ar.

**A.** Two possible reasons — first, as a performer, Reed may be a touch too off-beat to be a major star. Second, he's said to be a little difficult to deal with, and that means he often gets bypassed for first-rate roles.

**Q.** PBS aired a powerful sci-fi series, "The Tripods," but it broke off in mid-story. A follow-up was promised. Was it ever shown? — E.R., Kalamazoo, Mich.

**A.** There actually have been two "Tripods" series, PBS explains — 13 episodes of "Tripods I" and 12 episodes of "Tripods II." The promised follow-up to both, however, was not shown here, although it was shown in England.

**Q.** Who was Meredith Baxter Birney's first husband, and how many children does she have? I say three and my friend says five. — M.B.S., Duluth, Minn.

**A.** Meredith was Mrs. Bush (not one of the White House Bushes) before she became Mrs. Birney. She has five children — Ted and Eva, by her first husband, and Kate, Mollie and Peter by David Birney.

**Q.** On "Mr. Belvedere," I say two actresses played Angela. My friend says only one. Who is right? — A.&A., Lawrence, Mass.

**A.** Your friend is. Only Michele Matheson has ever played that recurring character on the show, which is currently on hiatus but will probably return.

**Q.** Please settle an argument. I think Patti Page plays Aunt Iona on "General Hospital." No one agrees with me. — V.A., Moncton, N.B., Canada.

**A.** You are half right — a lady named Pa(l)ge does play that part, but it is Janis Paige, not Patti.

**Q.** My husband has been wondering if the woman who plays Sister Steve — Tracy Nelson — on "The Father Dowling Mystery" is related to the Ozzie and Harriet Nelson family. Is she? — M. & S.D., Clinton, Ark.

**A.** She is, indeed. Tracy Nelson is the daughter of Rick Nelson, son of Ozzie and Harriet. Her mother, Kristen, is the daughter of football hero Tom Harmon — so Tracy is the niece of actor Mark Harmon. And, incidentally, she is a great-great-granddaughter of Cecil B. DeMille.

**Q.** I am a big fan of Miss Barbara Stanwyck. She is a great lady. I was wondering if she was ever married and if she is still alive. — A.H., Amarillo, Texas.

**A.** Barbara died earlier this year. She was 82, and had been married twice — the first time, to the comedian Frank Fay, and then to Robert Taylor, in one of those big hoopla Hollywood marriages.

**Q.** Are there two versions of the movie "The Haunting," with Susan Miles? I saw a televised version in '63

or '64 which differed in many aspects from the version I recently rented. — E. T., Jacksonville, Ar.

**A.** Susan Miles wasn't in "The Haunting" — the women in that film were Claire Bloom and Julie Harris. Susan was in "The Hireling." Maybe the two titles were enough to confuse you. Both films were substantially edited for TV, however.



Alan Arkin



Tracy Nelson

**Q.** Is Parker Stevenson of "Baywatch" really married to Kirstie Alley of "Cheers"? — L.P., Andover, Mass.

**A.** Yes, lucky guy.

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**Q.** Could you please tell me about Sonja Henie? When did she pass away, and how old was she? — V., North Andover, Mass.

**A.** The dimpled ice skater who became a movie star was 59 when she died in 1969.

**Q.** I have for years been trying to find out the name of a movie, with Alan Arkin. He played the father of two young boys, living in New York. He tries to get a better life for the boys. Can you identify this film for me? — D.V.C., Frackville, Pa.

**A.** That was a lovely film called

"Popi," which was released in 1969.

**Q.** Did Angela Lansbury of "Murder, She Wrote" play Edwina Brown in the movie "National Velvet"? It seems to me she did. The girl had a remarkable appearance that reminds me of her. — N.C.S., Andover, Mass.

**A.** Yes, that was Angela — in her talented youth.

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