

From
Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
1540 Broadway, N.Y.C.

KATHRYN GRAYSON

One of the screen's most beautiful young stars and possessor of one of the world's loveliest voices, Kathryn Grayson literally "grew up" in Hollywood.

It was as a school girl at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios that the singer was introduced to the theatrical world. For a year she continued her high school lessons, studied voice and learned the mechanics of her new world -- motion pictures. She saw everything but a camera! At the end of a year she made her screen debut -- a shy, dark-haired youngster who today stands among the industry's most talented personalities.

Born Zelma Hedrick, the daughter of Charles E. and Lillian Gray Hedrick, in Winston-Salem, N.C., February 9, Kathryn started her singing career the day she came into the world. There were two older brothers, Buddy and Hal, and a younger sister, Millie. All are musical and all have the rich, full voices which characterizes their talented sister.

When Kathryn was three, the family moved to St. Louis where she attended both public and private schools. It was here that she met Frances Marshall of the Chicago Civic Opera Company. Miss Marshall became interested in the youngster and urged her to develop the voice which she felt some day would be recognized the world over. After a few years in St. Louis, the family moved to Texas, then on to California and Hollywood.

Kathryn continued with her singing and her studies at Manual Arts High School. Then came an opportunity when Louis B. Mayer heard the girl sing. The result was a contract without a screen test.

At M-G-M her professional name was chosen from her own middle name, and Grayson from her mother's maiden name, Gray. She began an intensive program of study with the studio's musical, dramatic, diction, dancing and technical specialists in preparation for the day of her screen debut.

A year later, in July of 1940, she was ready for her first film role, that of the singing secretary in "Andy Hardy's Private Secretary," with Mickey Rooney. Next came the romantic feminine lead in "The Vanishing Virginian," followed by "Rio Rita," with Abbott and Costello, "Seven Sweethearts," "Thousands Cheer," and the record-breaking "Anchors Aweigh," which brought her full-fledged stardom.

Miss Grayson lives in a home in the Brentwood Hills which she has furnished with her loved antiques. Of particular note is the century-old organ which stands in the entrance hall, and a hand-carved cuckoo clock.

Frequent visitors and guests of the singer are her young nieces and nephews whom she "mothers" for two months each summer. Now, of course, she has her young daughter, Patricia Kathryn, born October 7, 1948.

Among her hobbies are drawing and painting. She loves to hike, eat picnic lunches, cook, play golf, mow the lawn, give children's parties and make over old clothes into fashion standouts. And she's still planning on that operatic career.

In preparation for the day she hopes to sing at the Metropolitan, Miss Grayson gave a classical concert, her first, in Sacramento with the Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestra as accompaniment during the month of November, 1946.

Immediately following completion of her role in "That Midnight Kiss", the actress, accompanied by her husband Johnnie Johnston left for England and a two-weeks engagement at London's Palladium.

Constantly studying voice, the star looks forward to the day she visits Italy and the world famed La Scala. Six weeks of each year are allowed Miss Grayson for pursuit of her classical musical career, in addition to her screen work.

Five feet, three inches in height, she weighs 120 pounds, has hazel eyes, gleaming brown hair, very red cheeks and a tremendous amount of energy.

Her favorite memory is the old janitor of the St. Louis Municipal Opera House. It was he who encouraged her to sing for him everyday. His enthusiastic applause did much to warm the heart of the less-than-teen-age youngster. But it wasn't until she went to bid her old friend good-bye and sing one last song for him, that she made a discovery.

Kathryn's musical encourager and devoted fan was -- deaf!

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STATISTICS

Born, Zelma Hedrick, Winston-Salem, N.C., February 9, daughter of Charles E. and Lillian Gray Hedrick. Educated, public and private schools, St. Louis, Manual Arts High School, Los Angeles, ~~Married Johnnie Johnston, August 21, 1947. Children: daughter, Patricia Kathryn, born October 7, 1948. Height, 5 feet, 3 inches. Weight, 120 pounds. Hair, brown. Eyes, hazel. Occupations: singer, actress.~~

SCREEN: "Andy Hardy's "Private Secretary," 1940; "The Vanishing Virginian," "Rio Rita," 1941; "Seven Sweethearts," 1942; "Thousands Cheer," 1943; "Anchors Aweigh," 1944; "Ziegfeld Follies of 1946," "Two Sisters From Boston," "Till the Clouds Roll By," "It Happened in Brooklyn," 1946; "The Kissing Bandit," 1947; "That Midnight Kiss," 1949; "The Toast of New Orleans," "Grounds for Marriage," 1950.

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