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Mary Wickes: I Know I've Seen That Face Before (Hollywood Legends Series)

Steve Taravella

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Moviegoers know her as the housekeeper in *White Christmas*, the nurse in *Now, Voyager*, and the crotchety choir director in *Sister Act*. This book, filled with never-published behind-the-scenes stories from Broadway and Hollywood, chronicles the life of a complicated woman who brought an assortment of unforgettable nurses, nuns, and housekeepers to life on screen and stage.

Wickes (1910-1995) was part of some of the most significant moments in film, television, theatre, and radio history. On that frightening night in 1938 when Orson Welles recorded his earth-shattering "War of the Worlds" radio broadcast, Wickes was waiting on another soundstage for him for a rehearsal of *Danton's Death*, oblivious to the havoc taking place outside.

When silent film star Gloria Swanson decided to host a live talk show on this new thing called television, Wickes was one of her first guests. When Lucille Ball made one of her first TV appearances, Wickes appeared with her--and became Lucy's closest friend for more than thirty years. Wickes was the original Mary Poppins, long before an umbrella carried Julie Andrews across the rooftops of London. And when Disney began creating *101 Dalmatians*, Wickes was asked to pose for animators trying to capture the evil of Cruella De Vil.

The pinched-face actress who cracked wise by day became a confidante to some of the day's biggest stars by night, including Bette Davis and Doris Day. Bolstered by interviews with almost three hundred people, and by private correspondence from Ball, Davis, Day, and others, *Mary Wickes: I Know I've Seen That Face Before* includes scores of never-before-shared anecdotes about Hollywood and Broadway. In the process, it introduces readers to a complex woman who sustained a remarkable career for sixty years.

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