

**ALLUSIONS  
IN  
SUNSET  
BOULEVARD**

# Organ Grinder

**The grinder would crank his organ in a public place. The grinder would often have as a companion a White-headed Capuchin monkey to do tricks and attract attention. The monkey would collect the money from the audience**

**The authorities often treated the organ grinders as beggars or public nuisances.**



# **Salome the Daughter of Herodias** **(c AD 14 - between 62 and 71)**

**Christian traditions depict Salome as an icon of dangerous female seductiveness. According to Mark 6:21-29, Salome was the stepdaughter of King Herod, (the roman king who condemned Jesus) danced (the iconic *dance of the seven veils*), before him at the occasion of his birthday, Whereupon he promised with an oath, to give her whatsoever she wished. She asked for and received on a dish, the head of John the Baptist.**

# Miss Havisham

**A significant character in the Charles Dickens novel, *Great Expectations* She is a wealthy spinster, who lives in her ruined mansion with her adopted daughter, Estella, while she herself is described as looking like "the witch of the place".**



# Rudolph Valentino

(May 6, 1895 – August 23, 1926)

**Italian actor, sex symbol, and early pop icon. Known as the "Latin Lover. he was one of the most popular stars of the 1920s, and one of the most recognized stars from the silent movie era. Some of his best known roles include the silent films *The Sheik* and *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*. His untimely death at age 31 caused mass hysteria among his female fans, propelling him into icon status.**

Mentioned in  
Some Like It Hot



February 27, 1892  
December 28, 1983

# William Demarest

**Prolific film and TV actor, who worked on over 140 films. He started in show business working in vaudeville, then moved on to Broadway. His film career began in 1926 and spanned the decades up to the 1970s. His most famous TV role was in *My Three Sons* from 1965 to 1972, which starred Fred MacMurray of *The Apartment*.**



**May 23, 1883 –  
December 12, 1939**

**American actor, noted for his swashbuckling roles in silent films such as *The Black Pirate* (1926). At one point, Fairbanks was known as "The King of Hollywood"**

**He married Mary Pickford, America's Sweetheart in 1920. Together they are the "Fairbanks" referred to in *Sunset Boulevard*.**

**Mentioned in  
*Some Like It Hot***

# **Douglas Fairbanks**



(April 8, 1892 – May 29, 1979)

**Academy Award-winning motion picture star, as well as a co-founder of United Artists and one of the original 36 founders of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Known as "America's Sweetheart," "Little Mary" and "the girl with the curls,"**

**The American Film Institute named Pickford 24th among the greatest female stars of all time.**

Mentioned in  
Some Like It Hot

# Mary Pickford





# Rod La Rocque

November 20 1898

October 15 1969

**Rod performed in vaudeville as a teen, and by his twenties was signed up by Hollywood. Rod got his big break when he was hired by Cecil B. DeMille to star in his epic "The Ten Commandments" (1923). In 1927 married, silent screen star and actress Vilma Banky, in a huge, publicity-filled wedding, planned by Sam Goldwyn. Rod had made the transition to sound smoothly. By 1941 he made his last picture, the classic *Meet John Doe*.**



(1898 -1991)

**Vilma was dubbed "The Hungarian Rhapsody", and starred in some of the most successful films of the silent era, including "The Dark Angel" (1925), with Ronald Colman, "The Eagle" (1925) and "The Son of the Sheik" (1926) opposite Rudolph Valentino. Vilma's wedding to Rod La Rocque was an extravagant event paid for by Goldwyn. Sound destroyed Vilma's film career, since she barely spoke English, and she had a distinct accent which would have limited her American roles in any case. Her last American film was a sound picture with Edward G. Robinson called "A Lady to Love" (1930); after that she went to Germany and made two more films before retiring from the screen, her last film being "The Rebel" (1933).**

# Vilma Bánky



May 5, 1914

November 15, 1958

known sometimes as "**Ty Power**", was an American film and stage actor who appeared in dozens of films from the 1930s to the 1950s, often in swashbuckler roles or romantic leads such as *The Mark of Zorro*, *The Black Swan*, *Prince of Foxes*, *The Black Rose*, and *Captain from Castile*.

# Tyrone Power



**November 9, 1895**  
**February 23, 1930**

**American film actress and the most popular screen comedienne of the silent film era. Her later career was marked by several successive scandals, including the murder of director William Desmond Taylor.**

**"Norma Desmond", which has been cited as a combination of the names Mabel Normand and William Desmond Taylor .**

# **Mabel Normand**



**July 10, 1895**

**January 9, 1936**

**Actor and major star of the silent film era.**

**Known as "the great lover," he rivaled even the great Rudolph Valentino as a box office draw. Though he was often cited as one of the high profile examples of an actor who was unsuccessful in making the transition to talkies.**

# John Gilbert



**February 18, 1890**

**October 29, 1963**

**American actor whose career spanned silent films and talkies, appearing in *The Sheik*, *A Woman of Paris*, and *A Star is Born*.**

**“Suave” and “debonair” are synonymous with Adolphe Menjou. The epitome of knavish, continental charm and sartorial opulence, Menjou, was known for his trademark waxy black mustache, and tailored Suits and Tuxedos.**

**Adolphe was a “friendly” witness for th House on Un-American Activities Committee.**

# **ADOLPHE MENJOU**



# Elsa

# Maxwell

**She was best known as a hostess to the celebrities of her day. In her own words, she was**

**"... a short, fat, homely piano player from Keokuk, Iowa, with no money or background, [who] decided to become a legend and did just that."**



**Wallace Reid might have made the perfect F. Scott Fitzgerald character, a Dick Diver or even a Gatsby, an eighteen-karat-gold Princeton man -- flaming, gentle, beautiful, and doomed. Conflicting accounts abound as to the origins of his morphine addiction, but of general accord is that, after suffering an injury during location filming, he was given morphine to dull the pain and continue shooting. Reid's drug related death was only the beginning of a string of scandals that rocked Hollywood.**

# Wallace Reid





**February 26, 1921**

**March 11, 2007**

**American film actress and singer.**

**Hutton made 19 films between 1942 and 1952 including a hugely popular *The Perils of Pauline*. She was billed over Fred Astaire in the 1950 musical *Let's Dance*. 1950 was her biggest year, and she was one of the industries biggest star in 1950. Hutton's greatest screen triumph was *Annie Get Your Gun*.**

# Betty Hutton



**September 3, 1913**  
**January 29, 1964**

# Alan Ladd

**American film actor. He was famous for his emotionless demeanor and small stature.**

**Films include:  
Shane and The  
Great Gatsby**



# Charles Chaplin

April 16, 1889 – December 25, 1977

**Academy Award-winning  
English comedy actor.**

**Chaplin became one of the  
most famous actors as well  
as a notable director,  
composer and musician in  
early Hollywood. He is  
considered to have been  
one of the finest mimes  
and clowns ever caught on  
film and has greatly  
influenced performers in  
this field.**



# Black Dahlia

Elizabeth Short

July 29, 1924

January 15, 1947

**Victim of a gruesome and much-publicized murder. Nicknamed the Black Dahlia, Short was found severely mutilated, with her body severed, on January 15, 1947 in Leimert Park, Los Angeles, California. The Black Dahlia murder has been a baffler. It is the most infamous unresolved homicide in LAPD history.**



The

Wax Works

# Buster Keaton

October 4, 1895 –  
February 1, 1966)

**Academy Award-winning American comic actor and filmmaker. Best known for his silent films, his trademark was physical comedy with a stoic, deadpan expression on his face, earning him the nickname "The Great Stone Face" One of the Wax works he as largely forgotten by the public in 1950.**



**Born March 30, 1888  
Died in Hemet, California  
February 11, 1974**

## **Anna Q. Nilsson**

**Swedish actress who  
achieved success in  
American silent movies.**

**With sound films,  
Nilsson's career went  
into a sharp decline,  
although she continued  
to play small, often  
uncredited parts in films  
into the 1950s. Her best  
known performance in a  
sound film is as "herself",  
as one of the "waxworks"  
in Sunset Boulevard.**



October 26, 1875 - 21  
December 21, 1958

# H. B. Warner

Warner began his film career in silent films in 1914. He played lead roles, culminating in the role of Jesus Christ in Cecil B. DeMille's silent 1927 film epic, *The King of Kings*. Other films include: *You Can't Take It with You* (1938), *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and *It's a Wonderful Life*





# Mack Sennett Bathing Beauties

**The picture to the right features Gloria Swanson (on top) when she was one of Mack Sennett's Bathing Beauties.**

**The Sennett Bathing Beauties were pin-up girls for the doughboys of the First World War.**



**Gloria Swanson  
(Norma) and Phyllis  
Haver in 1917**

# Pearl White

**(March 4, 1889 –  
August 4, 1938)**

**American film  
actress, the so-  
called "Stunt  
Queen" of silent  
films, most  
notably in *The  
Perils of Pauline*.**



As

Themselves

s

August 12, 1881

January 21, 1959

**Academy Award-winning American filmmaker known for the flamboyance and showmanship of his movies.**

**In Sunset Boulevard, DeMille plays himself on the set of one of his biblical epics, Samson and Delilah. Other films include: The Ten Commandments in 1923 and 1956 and The Greatest Show on Earth 1951.**

# C B DeMille



**May 2, 1885**

**February 1, 1966**

**Gossip columnist, whose long-running feud with friend turned arch-rival Louella Parsons became at least as notorious as many of Hopper's columns.**

**Hedda plays herself in Sunset Boulevard.**

**Hopper courted controversy as well for "naming names" of suspected or alleged Communists during the Hollywood Blacklist.**

# **Hedda Hopper**



**A meeting place of movie actors and dealmakers from the 1930s through the 1950s.**

**Insiders referred to it as "headquarters".**

**Hollywood legend holds that Lana Turner was discovered there.**

**Schwab's Drug Store,  
at 8024 Sunset  
Boulevard in  
Hollywood, California,**



**Norma Desmond is driven in an antique Isotta-Fraschini by her chauffeur Max.**

