

# Margaret Brien: A Career Chronicle and Biographical Odyssey

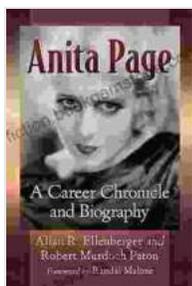


Margaret Brien, born on September 15, 1938, was a child actress who captivated the hearts of audiences worldwide during the Golden Age of Hollywood. Her exceptional talent, disarming charm, and memorable

performances left an indelible mark on the silver screen. This comprehensive article delves into the life and career of Margaret Brien, chronicling her remarkable journey from a precocious child star to a respected adult actress and author.

## Early Life and Career

Margaret Brien was born in Los Angeles, California, to William Birnbaum, a businessman, and Marguerite Brien, a former dancer. From an early age, Margaret displayed a remarkable affinity for the performing arts. She began her career as a dancer at the age of two and made her film debut at the tender age of five in the 1942 musical "Journey for Margaret."



### Margaret O'Brien: A Career Chronicle and Biography

by Allan R. Ellenberger

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In 1944, Margaret's career reached new heights when she starred opposite William Powell in the heartwarming comedy-drama "Meet Me in St. Louis." Her portrayal of Tootie Smith, the precocious and lovable tomboy, earned her an Academy Award for Best Juvenile Performance and solidified her status as a rising star.

Margaret followed up her Oscar-winning performance with a series of memorable roles, including the title character in "Jane Eyre" (1944), the endearing orphan in "National Velvet" (1944), and the spirited tomboy in "The Adventure of Priscilla" (1947). Her versatility and emotional depth belied her young age, and she became known for her ability to connect with audiences on a profound level.

## **Peak of Success**

The late 1940s and early 1950s marked the peak of Margaret Brien's career. She became one of the most popular and sought-after child actors in Hollywood, earning the nickname "The American Sweetheart." In 1948, she received her second Academy Award nomination for her performance in "Little Women."

Margaret's popularity extended beyond the silver screen. She made numerous appearances on radio, television, and in print media. Her wholesome image and heartwarming performances made her a favorite with fans of all ages. At the height of her fame, she was featured on the cover of countless magazines and was even invited to meet President Truman.

## **Later Career**

As Margaret Brien matured into a young woman, her career shifted away from child roles. She continued to act in both film and television, but her roles became more complex and varied. She appeared in such films as "The Silver Chalice" (1954), "The VIPs" (1963), and "Eleanor and Franklin" (1976).

In addition to her acting career, Margaret also pursued other interests. She became a licensed pilot and developed a passion for writing. In 1992, she published her autobiography, "Margaret Brien: Star to Star."

## **Personal Life**

Margaret Brien married three times. Her first marriage, to Kenneth W. Clancy Jr., ended in divorce. She then married Arnold L. Rosen, a theater director, in 1966. Rosen passed away in 1994. In 2000, Margaret married Harry M. Kempley, a retired Air Force colonel.

Margaret Brien was known for her quiet demeanor and generous spirit. She was a devoted animal lover and supported numerous charities, including the Margaret Brien Animal Defense Fund.

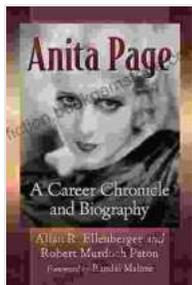
## **Later Years and Legacy**

Margaret Brien continued to make occasional film and television appearances in her later years. She also remained active in the performing arts community, serving as a board member of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

Margaret Brien's legacy as one of the most beloved child actresses of the Golden Age of Hollywood remains intact. Her memorable performances continue to charm and inspire audiences of all generations. She will always be remembered as Tootie Smith, the irrepressible and endearing tomboy from "Meet Me in St. Louis."

Margaret Brien's career chronicle and biographical odyssey is a testament to her exceptional talent, hard work, and unwavering dedication to the craft of acting. From her humble beginnings as a child performer to her enduring

legacy as an adult actress and author, Margaret Brien has left an unforgettable mark on the entertainment industry. Her performances continue to resonate with audiences, reminding us of the power and magic that can be found within the silver screen.



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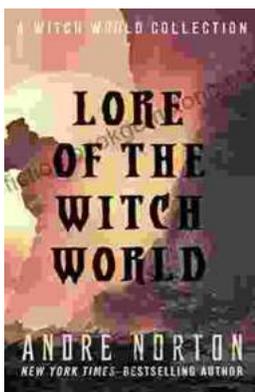
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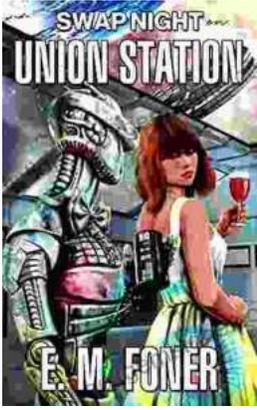
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