

Texas Personalities

Linda Darnell

Linda Darnell, was born Monetta Eloyse Darnell, in Dallas, Texas on October 16, 1923. She was one of five children of a post office worker and his wife. A Texas-born beauty, her mother encouraged her to model. By 1934, she was modeling clothes for an area department store. Sometimes officials would think that she was 15 or 16 because she really didn't look her age. Neither Linda nor her mother discouraged their thinking. By the time Linda was 13, she was appearing with local theater companies and her talent was already becoming apparent. There was no doubt that Linda had a rare gift for someone so young. When the Hollywood moguls sent scouts to the Dallas-Fort Worth area, her mother thought it would be a good idea to give Linda a shot at a try-out. The talent scouts took one look at her and her acting abilities and arranged for a screen test. She made the trek to Hollywood and when her true age was discovered she was sent home.

After two years, Linda returned to California and her career was off and running. Her debut was in 1939 in *A Hotel For Women*. She was all of 16 at the time and became the youngest leading lady in Hollywood history. Her next film was that same year in *Day-Time Wife*. Her third film was *Star Dust*, made in 1940, and Linda immediately rose to the heights of stardom. Other quality films followed. In 1941 she appeared in *Blood and Sand* and *Rise and Shine*. In 1945, she was in *Hangover Square*. The movie proved to be a box-office bonanza. The following year, Linda appeared in *Centennial Summer*.

Later that same year, she co-starred with Henry Fonda and Victor Mature in *My darling Clementine*. It was another hit. She reached the height of her career when she played opposite Cornell Wilde in 1947's *Forever Amber*. In 1952, she starred in *Blackbeard The Pirate*. Her final appearance was in 1965's *Black Spurs*.

She was married and divorced three times. Husbands were: J. Peverell Marley (1944-1952), Phillip Liebmann (1954-1955), and Merle Roy Robertson (1957-1962). On April 10, 1965, Linda died of burns she suffered in the house fire of her former secretary. Ironically, she had been watching *Star Dust* on television, which was one of the films that set her career in motion. She had filmed a total of 46 movies. Often described as the "girl with the perfect face", Linda died at the age of 41.

[courtesy of <http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Hills/2440/index-a.html>]

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