

DALE EVANS

Dale Evans was Lucille Wood Smith on October 31, 1912 in Uvalde, Texas. While still in infancy her name was changed to Frances Octavia Smith. At age 14, she eloped with her first husband, Thomas F. Fox, to whom she bore a son when she was 15. They divorced in 1929, and she married August Wayne Johns that same year, a union that ended in divorce in 1935. She also married arranger Robert Dale Butts in 1937, divorcing nine years later.

Smith took the name "Dale Evans" in the early thirties when she took up a singing career. She gained a lot of exposure on radio as the featured singer on the *Edgar Bergen/Charlie McCarthy Show*. She also had a movie career at 20th Century Fox, being promoted as the girl sidekick of her "brother" Tommy (who was actually her first son).

Evans married Roy Rogers in 1947 (the marriage was his third and her fourth) on New Year's Eve. The two were a team on- and off-screen from 1946 until Rogers' death in 1998. They had one daughter together, who died of complications from Down's Syndrome before she turned two. Her life inspired Evans to write her bestseller *Angel Unaware*, and Evans worked dutifully to change public perceptions of children with developmental disabilities.

From 1944 to 1957, Dale Evans and her husband starred in the highly successful radio and television series *The Roy Rogers Show*, in which they continued their cowboy and cowgirl roles, with her riding her trusty buckskin horse, Buttermilk. Evans appeared in more than thirty films and sang some two hundred songs, as well as writing the well-known song "Happy Trails", which became the duo's theme song.

Evans was an outspoken Christian speaking at an 1964 "Project Prayer" rally in Los Angeles, part of a protest against the abolition of school prayer by the U.S. Supreme Court. She recorded several solo albums of religious music, and she had her own religious TV program in the 1990's.

Evans died of congestive heart failure on February 7, 2001 at the age of 88 in Apple Valley, California, USA, three years after the death of Roy Rogers.

Information for this biography was culled from Wikipedia.

For the Old-Time Radio Researchers, this is your announcer, _____. Happy Trails to you!