Jun 1 1926

**Marilyn Monroe is Born**

She was born Norma Jeane Mortenson on June 1, 1926 in Los Angeles, California, to Gladys Baker.

As the identity of her father is undetermined, she was later baptized Norma Jeane Baker. Gladys had been a film cutter at RKO studios, but psychological problems prevented her from keeping the job and she was eventually committed to a mental institution.

Norma Jeane spent most of her childhood in foster homes and orphanages until 1937, when she moved in with family friend Grace McKee Goddard. Unfortunately, when Grace's husband was transferred to the East Coast in 1942, the couple couldn't afford to take 16-year-old Norma Jeane with them. Norma Jeane had two options: return to the orphanage or get married

Jun 19 1942

**Marilyn Monroe Marries Jim Dougherty**

Norma Jeane entered Van Nuys High School in September of 1941, but her days as a typical high-school girl were numbered.

At about that time, Doc Goddard received a job promotion that required him to relocate his family to West Virginia. At some point it was determined that Norma Jeane would not make the move with the Goddards, and that 61-year-old Aunt Ana could no longer take care of her.

Grace decided that a convenient solution to all involved would be Norma Jeane's marriage to a local boy, 21-year-old Jim Dougherty. The only alternative, according to Grace, would be to send Norma Jeane back to the orphanage.

The Doughertys lived in the same neighborhood as the Goddards, and young Jim sometimes drove Norma Jeane and Eleanor "Bebe" Goddard home from school. Norma Jeane harbored a crush on Jim, who had been a football star and student body president at Van Nuys High School.

In The Secret Happiness of Marilyn Monroe and To Norma Jeane with Love, Jimmie, he wrote that they were in love but dreams of stardom lured her away. She always maintained theirs was a marriage of convenience. She was furious when he claimed to Photoplay in 1953 she threatened to jump off the Santa Monica Pier if he left her. He later appeared on To Tell the Truth as "Marilyn Monroe's real first husband." He sold signed copies of his books on his website

On June 19, 1942 she wed her 21-year-old neighbor Jimmy Dougherty, whom she had been dating for six months. "She was a sweet, generous and religious girl," Jimmy said. "She liked to be cuddled." By all accounts Norma Jeane loved Jimmy, and they were happy together until he joined the Merchant Marines and was sent to the South Pacific in 1944.

1946

**Marilyn Monroe Goes Blonde**

On that day in 1946, a timid Norma Jeane walked into the salon and asked if something could be done to make her look better for her shampoo shoot that evening.

Tint technician Sylvia Barnhart and shop owner Frank immediately set out to straighten Norma Jeane's hair, which Barnhart has described as "brown and kinky."

The strong solution used in the process also lightened her hair, giving it a reddish-blonde cast. Norma Jeane was quite pleased by the effect and wanted to go blonder. Over the next four to five months, Barnhart changed the color of the young model's hair to a golden honey-blonde by lightening and toning it a step at a time.

Barnhart disputes the oft-told tale that Norma Jeane did not want to be a blonde and that she resisted any suggestion to change her hair color. To the contrary, Norma Jeane felt a lighter color helped accentuate her eyes, which Barnhart has described as "beautiful [and] luminous."

While Dougherty was in the Merchant Marine, Norma Jeane found employment in the Radioplane Munitions Factory. She sprayed airplane parts with fire retardant and inspected parachutes. During this time, Army photographer David Conover snapped a photograph of her for a Yank magazine article. He encouraged her to apply to The Blue Book Modeling Agency. She signed with the agency and began researching the work of Jean Harlow and Lana Turner. She was told that they were looking for models with lighter hair, so Norma Jeane bleached her brunette hair to a golden blonde.

Jun 1946

**Marilyn Monroe and Jim Dougherty Get Divorced**

In his 1976 book The Secret Happiness of Marilyn Monroe, as well as in various interviews and articles, Jim Dougherty blames the breakup of his marriage on his Merchant Marine duties.

He paints an idyllic portrait of his life with Norma Jeane in the period before he was shipped overseas.

Dougherty implies that if he had not left Norma Jeane alone, circumstances would have been different for them. He talks of Norma Jeane Dougherty and Marilyn Monroe as though they were two different people -- as if in his absence persons and forces beyond his control changed his naive, uncomplicated Norma Jeane into an ambitious, calculating career woman.

“My marriage didn't make me sad, but it didn't make me happy either. My husband and I hardly spoke to each other. This wasn't because we were angry. We had nothing to say. I was dying of boredom.”

— Marilyn Monroe

Dougherty wrote her several letters telling her that once he returned from service, she would have to give up her modeling. A dissatisfied Norma Jeane, who now saw the possibilities of a modeling and acting career, decided then to divorce Dougherty. The marriage ended when he returned from overseas in 1946.

Aug 26 1946

**Norma Jeane Changes Name to Marilyn Monroe**

Norma Jeane chose to celebrate her good fortune with her new associates -- Ben Lyon and Bebe Daniels.

The first order of business was to change the young actress's name -- Lyon utterly loathed "Norma Jeane Dougherty."

Lyon remembered a stage actress from the 1920s whom he had long admired -- a musical performer named Marilyn Miller. He thought "Marilyn" would better suit Norma Jeane's new, glamorous identity as a Hollywood starlet.

For her part, Norma Jeane suggested her mother's family name, "Monroe," as a last name. Lyon liked the alliteration of "Marilyn Monroe," and told Norma Jeane that the double "M" was a lucky omen. So it was that in the course of one afternoon, Norma Jeane Mortenson Baker Dougherty was transformed into Marilyn Monroe.

She was forever grateful to Lyon for his support and his help. A few years later, when Marilyn Monroe was on top, she sent Lyon a photograph inscribed: "You found me, named me and believed in me when no one else did. My love and thanks forever."

Mar 3 1950

**"Love Happy" is Released**

Love Happy (1949) was the 14th (including Humor Risk), and virtually the last, Marx Brothers movie. The film stars Harpo Marx, Chico Marx, and, in a smaller role than usual, Groucho Marx, plus Ilona Massey, Vera-Ellen, Paul Valentine, Marion Hutton, Raymond Burr, Bruce Gordon (in his film debut), and Eric Blore, with a memorable walk-on by a young Marilyn Monroe. It was directed by David Miller, and written by Frank Tashlin and Mac Benoff, based on a story by Harpo.

May 23 1950

**"The Asphalt Jungle" Is Released**

The Asphalt Jungle (1950) is an Academy Award nominated film noir directed by John Huston.

The caper film is based on the novel of the same name by W.R. Burnett and stars an ensemble cast including Sterling Hayden, Jean Hagen, Sam Jaffe, Louis Calhern, James Whitmore, and, in a minor role, Marilyn Monroe as she was an unknown at the time and was not mentioned on the posters.

The film tells the story of a group of men planning and executing a jewel robbery. It was nominated for four Academy Awards.

In 2008, The Asphalt Jungle was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant".

The Asphalt Jungle is a brilliantly conceived and executed anatomy of a crime -- or, as director John Huston and scripter Ben Maddow put it, "a left-handed form of human endeavor." Recently paroled master criminal Erwin "Doc" Riedenschneider (Sam Jaffe), with funding from crooked attorney Emmerich (Louis Calhern), gathers several crooks together in Cincinnati for a Big Caper. Among those involved are Dix (Sterling Hayden), an impoverished hood who sees the upcoming jewel heist as a means to finance his dream of owning a horse farm. Hunch-backed cafe owner (James Whitmore) is hired on to be the driver for the heist; professional safecracker Louis Ciavelli (Anthony Caruso) assembles the tools of his trade; and a bookie (Marc Lawrence) acts as Emmerich's go-between. The robbery is pulled off successfully, but an alert night watchman shoots Ciavelli. Corrupt cop (Barry Kelley), angry that his "patsy" (Lawrence) didn't let him in on the caper, beats the bookie into confessing and fingering the other criminals involved. From this point on, the meticulously planned crime falls apart with the inevitability of a Greek tragedy. Way down on the cast list is Marilyn Monroe in her star-making bit as Emmerich's sexy "niece"; whenever The Asphalt Jungle would be reissued, Monroe would figure prominently in the print ads as one of the stars. The Asphalt Jungle was based on a novel by the prolific W.R. Burnett, who also wrote Little Caesar and Saint Johnson (the fictionalized life story of Wyatt Earp).

Jul 18 1953

**"Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" Is Released**

Second-billed Marilyn Monroe is the blonde in question in this second film version of Gentlemen Prefer Blondes: Miss Lorelei Lee, whose philosophy is "diamonds are a girl's best friend." Together with her best human friend Dorothy (top-billed Jane Russell), showgirl Lorelei embarks upon a boat trip to Paris, where she intends to marry millionaire Gus Esmond (Tommy Noonan). En route, the girls are bedeviled by private detective Malone (Elliot Reid), hired by Esmond's father (Taylor Holmes) to make certain that Lorelei isn't just another gold-digger. When Dorothy falls in love with the poverty-stricken Malone, Lorelei decides to find her pal a wealthier potential husband, and that's how she gets mixed up with flirtatious diamond merchant Sir Francis Beekman (Charles Coburn) and precocious youngster Henry Spofford III (George "Foghorn" Winslow). Most of the Leo Robin-Jule Styne songs from the Broadway show remain intact, including Marilyn Monroe's rendition of "Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend," a production number later imitated by pop icon Madonna.

Nov 5 1953

**"How To Marry A Millionaire" Is Released**

A remake of 1933's The Greeks Had a Word for Them, as well as a retread of 20th Century-Fox's favorite plotline, How to Marry a Millionaire was the first Hollywood comedy to be lensed in Cinemascope. Lauren Bacall, Betty Grable and Marilyn Monroe play three models of modest means who rent an expensive Manhattan penthouse apartment and pose as women of wealth. It's all part of a scheme hatched by Bacall to snare rich husbands for herself and her roommates. The near-sighted Monroe is wooed by an international playboy, but ends up settling for the tax-dodging fugitive (David Wayne) who owns the girls' apartment. The knuckle-headed Grable goes off on an illicit weekend in the mountains with a grouchy married executive (Fred Clark), but falls instead for a comparatively poor--but very handsome--forest ranger (Rory Calhoun). And Bacall very nearly lands an aging millionaire (William Powell), but has a sudden attack of conscience and opts instead for the supposedly poverty-stricken chap (Cameron Mitchell) who has been pursuing her since reel one. It turns out that she has actually landed one of the richest men in New York--and upon learning this, our three luscious heroines faint dead away. Before the opening credits roll in How to Marry a Millionaire, we are treated to a "live" orchestral rendition of Alfred Newman's "Street Scene" overture, conducted by Newman himself. In addition to its being the first wide-screen comedy, Millionaire was also the first-ever presentation of the weekly NBC series Saturday Night at the Movies, premiering on the small screen on September 23, 1961.

Dec 1953

**Hugh Hefner establishes Playboy**

With borrowed money and a heart full of hope, 27-year-old Hugh Hefner launched his debut Playboy Magazine, with “Sweetheart of the Month” Marilyn Monroe gracing the cover in December of 1953. Now, Marilyn did not exactly pose nude for Hefner himself for this issue. He actually bought the rights of the nude photos from a local calendar store in Chicago and put the 44 pages of the first issue of Playboy Magazine together in his own home. Hugh Hefner did not put his name nor an issue date on the first 50,000 issues of Playboy Magazine.

The first issue, in December 1953, was undated, as Hefner was unsure there would be a second. He produced it in his Hyde Park kitchen. The first centerfold was Marilyn Monroe, although the picture used originally was taken for a calendar rather than for Playboy. The first issue sold out in weeks. Known circulation was 53,991. The cover price was 50¢. Copies of the first issue in mint to near mint condition sold for over $5,000 in 2002.

Jan 14 1954

**Marilyn Monroe Marries Joe DiMaggio**

She and Joe DiMaggio were married in San Francisco on January 14, 1954.

They travelled to Japan soon after, combining a honeymoon with a business trip previously arranged by DiMaggio. For two weeks she took a secondary role to DiMaggio as he conducted his business, telling a reporter, "Marriage is my main career from now on."

Marilyn Monroe, who packs no mean jolt herself, said she was very happy. Di Maggio said he was also very happy. Also happy was the battery of columnists which has spent no little time in the past two years running down rumors that the two were already secretly married, were to be married, or were not speaking to each other.

The time and place of the wedding was kept a closely guarded secret and only about 500 people managed to hear about it in time to turn the corridors outside Municipal Judge Charles S. Perry’s court into a madhouse.

Sep 15 1954

**Marilyn Monroe Films 'Skirt' Scene for The Seven Year Itch**

The scene was originally filmed during the early morning hours of September 15, 1954, at the corner of Lexington Avenue and 52nd Street.

Heavily publicized beforehand, it attracted a thousand or more spectators like iron filings to a magnet. Also on hand were Monroe’s husband, Joe Dimaggio, scores of photographers, and a sizeable contingent of New York’s finest called in to maintain order. Under Wilder’s relaxed but firm direction, the lead actors undertook repeated takes exiting the famous Trans-Lux Theater and exchanging flirtatious banter until the magic moment when Monroe’s dress is blown heavenward, revealing her million dollar legs and—scandalously for the era—white underpants.

The famous picture of Marilyn Monroe, laughing as her skirt is blown up by the blast from a subway vent, is shot on this day in 1954 during the filming of The Seven Year Itch. The scene infuriated her husband, Joe DiMaggio, who felt it was exhibitionist, and the couple divorced shortly afterward.

The footage of Monroe's dress billowing over a subway grate was shot twice: The first take was shot at Manhattan's Lexington Avenue at 52nd Street and the second on a sound stage. The sound stage footage is what made its way into the final film, as the original on-location footage's sound had been rendered useless by the over excited crowd present during filming whistling over Monroe's panties.

Dec 31 1954

**Marilyn Monroe Productions is Formed**

In December 1954, shortly after the completion of The Seven Year Itch, Marilyn formed Marilyn Monroe Productions, Inc., with photographer Milton Greene.

Marilyn had met Greene the previous year on the Fox lot when he had traveled to Hollywood to photograph her for Look magazine. The photographer and the former model hit it off instantly, and when they met again at a party a few days later, the two began discussing a possible partnership.

Throughout 1954, Greene conferred periodically with Marilyn about his partnership proposal. During the production of The Seven Year Itch, negotiations began in earnest, and the company was formed a few weeks later.

Marilyn Monroe Productions was established with 101 shares of stock; Marilyn controlled 51 shares, while Greene retained the remaining 50. Marilyn's function was to star in the films selected by the company, while Greene was to conduct all of the business and pay the bills.

The Seven Year Itch was released and became a success, earning an estimated $8 million.[77] Monroe received positive reviews for her performance and was in a strong position to negotiate with 20th Century Fox.[77] On New Year's Eve 1955, they signed a new contract which required Monroe to make four films over a seven-year period. The newly formed Marilyn Monroe Productions would be paid $100,000 plus a share of profits for each film. In addition to being able to work for other studios, Monroe had the right to reject any script, director or cinematographer she did not approve of

1955

**Marilyn Monroe Takes Acting Lessons From Actors Studios**

“ I saw that what she looked like was not what she really was, and what was going on inside her was not what was going on outside, and that always means there may be something to work with. In Marilyn's case, the reactions were phenomenal. She can call up emotionally what is required for a scene. Her range is infinite.   
”— Lee Strasberg, creator-director of the Actors Studio

Throughout 1955, Monroe studied with the Actors Studio, and found that one of her biggest obstacles was her severe stage fright. She was befriended by the actors Kevin McCarthy and Eli Wallach who each recalled her as studious and sincere in her approach to her studies, and noted that she tried to avoid attention by sitting quietly in the back of the class. When Strasberg felt Monroe was ready to give a performance in front of her peers, Monroe and Maureen Stapleton chose the opening scene from Eugene O'Neill's Anna Christie, and although she had faltered during each rehearsal, she was able to complete the performance without forgetting her lines. Kim Stanley later recalled that students were discouraged from applauding, but that Monroe's performance had resulted in spontaneous applause from the audience. While Monroe was a student, Lee Strasberg commented, "I have worked with hundreds and hundreds of actors and actresses, and there are only two that stand out way above the rest. Number one is Marlon Brando, and the second is Marilyn Monroe."

After that time, she was allowed to join the regular classes at the Actors Studio, though she never became an official member. During her tenure at the Actors Studio, Marilyn focused on her craft with such intensity that she won the respect and admiration of many of her fellow students.

Apr 8 1955

**Monroe Appeared on "Person to Person"**

On April 8, 1955, Marilyn appeared on Person to Person, a popular television interview program hosted by noted broadcast journalist Edward R. Murrow.

Murrow enjoyed a sterling reputation as a newsman, and being selected for Person to Person was both an honor and an ordeal for Marilyn.

Murrow asked his questions from the CBS studios, but the program originated live from the guests' homes. Marilyn's interview was conducted out of the Greenes' home, with both Milton and Amy appearing on camera with the glamorous star.

Marilyn was petrified by the thought of appearing on live television, but Amy Greene discreetly guided her through the interview. Among other things, Murrow inquired about Marilyn's move to the East Coast, (during this time, marries Arthur miller) her new production company, and her desire to act in dramatic roles. The program treated her defection from Twentieth Century-Fox as a positive decision, rather than as the impulsive act of a spoiled star.

June 3 1955

**"The Seven Year Itch" Is Released**

The Seven Year Itch is a 1955 film based on a three-act play by George Axelrod.

The film was co-written and directed by Billy Wilder, and starred Marilyn Monroe and Tom Ewell, reprising his Broadway role. It contains one of the most iconic images of the 20th century -- Monroe standing on a subway grate as her dress is blown above her knees by a passing train. The titular phrase, which refers to declining interest in a monogamous relationship after seven years of marriage, has been used by psychologists.

Like thousands of other Manhattanites, Tom Ewell annually packs his wife (Evelyn Keyes) and children off to summer vacation, staying behind to work at the office. This particular summer, the lonely Ewell begins fantasizing about the many women he'd foresworn upon getting married (in one of the fantasies, Ewell and Marguerite Chapman parody the beach rendezvous in From Here to Eternity). He is jolted back to reality when he meets his new neighbor--luscious model Marilyn Monroe. Inviting Monroe to dinner, Ewell intends to sweep her off her feet and into the boudoir. Things don't quite work out that way, thanks to Ewell's clumsiness (and essential decency) and Monroe's naivete. Still, Ewell becomes convinced that his impure thoughts will somehow be transmitted to his vacationing wife and to the rest of the world, leaving him wide open for scandal and ruination. In the original play, the husband and the next-door neighbor did have an affair, but both play and film arrived at the same happy ending, with Ewell and his missus contentedly reunited at summer's end. Featured in the cast of The Seven Year Itch are Robert Strauss as a lascivious handyman, Sonny Tufts as Evelyn Keye's former beau, Donald MacBride as Ewell's glad-handing boss, and veteran Broadway funny man Victor Moore in a cameo as a nervous plumber. ~ Hal Erickson, All Movie Guide

Oct 31 1955

**Marilyn Monroe and Joe DiMaggio Get Divorced**

DiMaggio eventually joined his wife in New York, but their relationship moved from disharmony to disaster after the shooting of one of Marilyn's most legendary scenes, the moment in which she stands above a subway grate to feel the rush of air that passes whenever a train rushes beneath her.

The shot of Marilyn's white dress billowing up to reveal her shapely legs is so identified with her image that it has become a virtual icon, at once celebrating her sexuality and encapsulating her legend.

The scene was shot at 52nd Street and Lexington in New York City in the middle of the night. Despite the late hour, thousands of fans showed up to catch a glimpse of Marilyn Monroe.

So many flashbulbs went off each time director Billy Wilder tried to shoot a take that he made a deal with the amateur photographers and the press: If they would allow him to shoot the scene, he would ask Marilyn to pose for them.

During the proceedings, DiMaggio walked onto the set, dismayed at the sight of his wife on exhibit for more than 2,000 strangers. His oft-quoted remark, "What the hell's going on here?" reflects his disdain not only for the public display of Marilyn's physical charms but also for her profession, which required it. Shortly after this highly publicized event, Marilyn and Joe filed for divorce.

During their honeymoon in Japan, she was asked to visit Korea as part of the USO. She performed ten shows in four days for over 100,000 servicemen. Maury Allen quoted New York Yankees PR man Arthur Richman that Joe told him that the marriage went wrong from then. On September 14, 1954, Monroe filmed the skirt-blowing scene for The Seven Year Itch in front of New York's Trans-Lux Theater. Bill Kobrin, then Fox's east coast correspondent, told the Palm Springs Desert Sun in 1956 that it was Billy Wilder's idea to turn the shoot into a media circus, and that the couple had a "yelling battle" in the theater lobby.She filed for divorce on grounds of mental cruelty 274 days after the wedding.

Jun 29 1956

**Marilyn Monroe Marries Arthur Miller**

During this time, the relationship between Monroe and Miller had developed, and although the couple were able to maintain their privacy for almost a year, the press began to write about them as a couple, often referred to as "The Egghead and The Hourglass". The reports of their romance were soon overtaken by news that Miller had been called to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee to explain his supposed communist affiliations. Called upon to identify communists he was acquainted with, Miller refused and was charged with contempt of Congress. He was acquitted on appeal. During the investigation, Monroe was urged by film executives to abandon Miller, rather than risk her career but she refused, later branding them as "born cowards". The press began to discuss an impending marriage, but Monroe and Miller refused to confirm the rumor. In June 1956, a reporter was following them by car, and as they attempted to elude him, the reporter's car crashed, killing a female passenger. Monroe became hysterical upon hearing the news, and their engagement was announced, partly in the expectation that it would reduce the excessive media interest they were being subjected to. They were married on June 29, 1956.

Later that evening, Marilyn and Miller slipped across the state line to White Plains, New York, where they were married in a civil ceremony. Whether the accident had anything to do with the promptness of their decision is open to debate.

Certainly, both wanted to put an end to the circus atmosphere. Two days later, on July 1, 1956, they were married in a Jewish ceremony at the home of Miller's agent. Lee Strasberg gave the bride away, and husband and wife celebrated with a reception for 25 close friends and associates.

Despite the tragedy that had preceded the event, Marilyn and Miller were ecstatic at their union, which is clearly evident in their wedding photographs. Marilyn not only adored her new husband, but she admired him for his talent and accomplishments. The usually reserved Miller was openly enamored of his beautiful and sensitive bride.

On June 29, 1956, Monroe married playwright Arthur Miller, whom she first met in 1950, in a civil ceremony in White Plains, New York. City Court Judge Seymour Robinowitz presided over the hushed ceremony in the law office of Sam Slavitt (the wedding had been kept secret from both the press and the public). Monroe and Miller wed again two days later in a Jewish ceremony before a small group of guests. Rabbi Robert E. Goldburg, a Reform rabbi at Congregation Mishkan Israel, presided over the ceremony.Their nuptials were celebrated at the home of Miller's literary agent, Kay Brown, in Westchester County, NY. Some 30 friends and relatives attended the hastily arranged party.

Aug 31 1956

**"Bus Stop" Is Released**

Bus Stop, also known as The Wrong Kind of Girl, is a 1956 motion picture directed by Joshua Logan for 20th Century Fox, starring Marilyn Monroe, Don Murray, Arthur O'Connell, Betty Field, Eileen Heckart, Robert Bray and Hope Lange.

The film was released on August 31, 1956.

Unlike most of Marilyn Monroe's movies, Bus Stop is neither a full-fledged comedy nor a musical, but rather a dramatic piece. Monroe does however sing one song: "That Old Black Magic" (by Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer). Bus Stop was based on two plays by William Inge, People in the Wind and Bus Stop. The inspiration for the play Bus Stop came from people Inge met in Tonganoxie, Kansas.

The film was shot in Idaho and Arizona.

In this cinemadaptation of William Inge's Broadway comedy Bus Stop, Marilyn Monroe is cast as Cherie, a fifth-rate nightclub chanteuse who captures the heart of Montana rodeo champ Bo (Don Murray). He, in turn, kidnaps Cherie and bundles her off to the roadside bus stop of the title. Gradually, the headstrong Bo learns that you can't rope a gal the same way you lasso a steer, but before this happens his face is rearranged by gallant bus driver Carl (Robert Bray). By this time, however, Cherie has fallen in love with her impulsive but basically good-hearted abductor. Others in the cast include Arthur O'Connell as Bo's level-headed travelling companion and "protector" Virgil, Betty Field as down-to-earth bus stop proprietress Grace, and Eileen Heckart as Cherie's confidante Vera. The film later inspired a 1961 TV series. A few TV prints of Bus Stop still exist bearing the alternate title Wrong Kind of Girl. ~ Hal Erickson, All Movie Guide

Jun 13 1957

**"The Prince and the Showgirl" is released**

Bus Stop was followed by The Prince and the Showgirl directed by Laurence Olivier, who also co-starred. Prior to filming, Olivier praised Monroe as "a brilliant comedienne, which to me means she is also an extremely skilled actress". During filming in England he resented Monroe's dependence on her drama coach, Paula Strasberg, regarding Strasberg as a fraud whose only talent was the ability to "butter Marilyn up". He recalled his attempts at explaining a scene to Monroe, only to hear Strasberg interject, "Honey — just think of Coca-Cola and Frank Sinatra."   
Despite Monroe and Olivier clashing, Olivier later commented that in the film "Marilyn was quite wonderful, the best of all."Monroe's performance was hailed by critics, especially in Europe, where she won the David di Donatello, the Italian equivalent of the Academy Award, as well as the French Crystal Star Award. She was also nominated for a BAFTA.

Mar 29 1959

**"Some Like It Hot" Is Released**

Some Like It Hot is a 1959 American comedy film directed by Billy Wilder and starring Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon.

The supporting cast includes George Raft, Joe E. Brown, Pat O'Brien and Nehemiah Persoff. The film was adapted by Billy Wilder and I.A.L. Diamond from the story by Robert Thoeren and Michael Logan. Logan had already written the story – but without the gangsters – for a German film, Fanfaren der Liebe (directed by Kurt Hoffmann, 1951), so that Wilder's film is considered by some as a remake.

The launching pad for Billy Wilder's comedy classic was a rusty old German farce, Fanfares of Love, whose two main characters were male musicians so desperate to get a job that they disguise themselves as women and play with an all-girl band in gangster-dominated 1929 Chicago. In this version, musicians Joe (Tony Curtis) and Jerry (Jack Lemmon) lose their jobs when a speakeasy owned by mob boss Spats Columbo (George Raft) is raided by prohibition agent Mulligan (Pat O'Brien). Several weeks later, on February 14th, Joe and Jerry get a job perfroming in Urbana and end up witnessing a gangland massacre in a parking garage. Fearing that they will be next on the mobsters' hit lists, Joe devises an ingenious plan for disguising their identities. Soon they are all dolled up and performing as Josephine and Daphne in Sweet Sue's all-girl orchestra. En route to Florida by train with Sweet Sue's band, the boys (girls?) make the acquaintance of Sue's lead singer Sugar Kane (Marilyn Monroe, in what may be her best performance). Joe and Jerry immediately fall in love, though of course their new feminine identities prevent them from acting on their desires. Still, they are determined to woo her, and they enact an elaborate series of gender-bending ruses complicated by the fact that flirtatious millionaire Osgood Fielding (Joe E. Brown) has fallen in love with "Daphne." The plot gets even thicker when Spats Columbo and his boys show up in Florida. Nominated for several Oscars, Some Like It Hot ended up the biggest moneymaking comedy up to 1959. Full of hilarious set pieces and movie in-jokes, it has not tarnished with time and in fact seems to get better with each passing year, as its cross-dressing humor keeps it only more and more up-to-date. ~ Hal Erickson, All Movie Guide

During 1981, after the worldwide success of the French comedy La Cage aux Folles, United Artists re-released Some Like It Hot to theatres. In 2000, the American Film Institute listed Some Like It Hot as the greatest American comedy film of all time.

Mar 8 1960

**Marilyn Monroe Receives Golden Globe For Best Comedy Actress**

Some Like it Hot became a resounding success, and was nominated for five Academy Awards.

Monroe was acclaimed for her performance and won the Golden Globe Award for Best Actress - Motion Picture Musical or Comedy. Wilder commented that the film was the biggest success he had ever been associated with.

Jan 1961

**Marilyn Monroe and Arthur Miller Get Divorced**

The Hollywood screen star Marilyn Monroe divorced her husband, playwright Arthur Miller, after less than five years of marriage.

The divorce was granted in Mexico, where a judge signed the decree. The grounds of divorce were listed as "incompatibility".

It was rumored that the pair had frequent quarrels over their differing lifestyles.

Mr Miller had been working with his wife on her most recent film, The Misfits, based on a short story he wrote, although the pair were reported to be barely speaking on set.

Her divorce from Arthur Miller was finalized in January 1961, with Monroe citing "incompatibility of character”.

Feb 1 1961

**"The Misfits" Is Released**

The Misfits (1961) is a American drama film, written by Arthur Miller, directed by John Huston, and starring Clark Gable, Marilyn Monroe, Montgomery Clift, Thelma Ritter, and Eli Wallach.

It was the final film appearance for both Gable and Monroe. Even though it was not a commercial success at the time of its release, it has later garnered critical respect for its script as well as the leading performances.

The final film of stars Clark Gable and Marilyn Monroe is an elegy for the death of the Old West from writer Arthur Miller and director John Huston. Gable stars as Gay Langland, an aging hand traveling the byways and working at rodeos with his two comrades, Guido (Eli Wallach) and young Perce Howland (Montgomery Clift). The three men come up with a plan to corral some misfit mustangs and sell them for dog food, but Gay's new girlfriend Roslyn Taber (Marilyn Monroe), a high-minded ex-stripper who has just divorced her husband Ray (Kevin McCarthy) in Reno, is appalled by the plan. Although both Guido and Perce are also in love with Roslyn, she stands by Gay, sure that in the end he will do the right thing, even as he and his pals begin their planned roundup.

May 19 1962

**Marilyn Monroe sings "Happy Birthday, Mr. President" to John F. Kennedy**

Approximately 17,000 people filled Madison Square Garden on the evening on May 19, 1962 to take part in this gala which featured Jack Benny and a host of stars, among them Maria Callas, Ella Fitzgerald, Jimmy Durante, and Peggy Lee.

Famed producer Richard Adler was in charge of the musical portion of the show and had rehearsed with Marilyn to prepare her in singing "Happy Birthday" to the President.

What occurred that evening has become a legendary moment in the history of American pop culture, with politics and Hollywood colliding head to head while the entire nation looked on. Captured on a few minutes of grainy celluloid, the image of Marilyn Monroe's breathy, nightclub version of "Happy Birthday" is forever stamped in our collective consciousness. Wearing a Jean Louis gown which Adlai Stevenson described as "skin and beads", Marilyn's disjointed and uncertain performance gives us a glimpse into the vulnerability and insecurity that plagued her entire life and career. That gown was sold at auction by Christie's of New York in October of 1999 for a record breaking price of 1.2 million dollars and the public interest in Marilyn Monroe continues to grow deeper with each passing year.

Monroe continued the song with a snippet from the classic song "Thanks for the Memory", for which she had written new lyrics specifically aimed at Kennedy.

Thanks, Mr. President   
For all the things you've done   
The battles that you've won   
The way you deal with U.S. Steel   
And our problems by the ton   
We thank you so much

Afterwards, President Kennedy came on stage and joked about the song, saying, "I can now retire from politics after having had Happy Birthday sung to me in such a sweet, wholesome way," alluding to Monroe's delivery, her racy dress, and her general image as a sex symbol.

The song and Monroe's performance have been remembered for numerous reasons. First, it was one of her last major public appearances (Monroe died August 5, 1962). In addition, there are persistent rumors that President Kennedy and Marilyn Monroe had had an affair, giving Monroe's performance another layer of meaning.

Aug 5 1962

**Marilyn Monroe Dies**

At only 36 years old, Marilyn Monroe died on August 5, 1962, at her Los Angeles home.

An empty bottle of sleeping pills were found by her bed. There has been some speculation over the years that she may have been murdered, but it was officially ruled as a drug overdose.

On August 5, 1962, LAPD police sergeant Jack Clemmons received a call at 4:25 a.m. from Dr. Ralph Greenson, Monroe's psychiatrist, proclaiming that Monroe was found dead at her home in Brentwood, Los Angeles, California. She was 36 years old. At the subsequent autopsy, eight milligram percent of Chloral Hydrate and 4.5 milligram percent of Nembutal were found in her system, and Dr. Thomas Noguchi of the Los Angeles County Coroners office recorded cause of death as "acute barbiturate poisoning," resulting from a "probable suicide". Many theories, including murder, circulated about the circumstances of her death and the timeline after the body was found. Some conspiracy theories involved John and Robert Kennedy, while other theories suggested CIA or Mafia complicity.

“Say a prayer for Norma Jean. She's dead”

— Jim Dougherty (to his wife)