

Powell, Dick (1904-1963) Encyclopedia Article

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A pop singer and bandleader, Dick Powell became famous as the perennial youthful star of backstage musical films during the 1930s. He appeared as the juvenile lead opposite dancer Ruby Keeler in a string of films which included *42nd Street*, *Footlight Parade*, and *Gold Diggers of 1933* (all 1933). Other films included *Gold Diggers of 1935* (1935), *Thanks a Million* (1935), *Gold Diggers of 1937* (1937), *On the Avenue* (1937), *Varsity Show* (1937), and *Star Spangled Rhythm* (1942). Powell later eschewed his clean-cut image and began to aspire to non-singing dramatic roles in films such as *Murder, My Sweet* (1944) and *The Bad and the Beautiful* (1952). He also directed several films, but it is as the energetic, wide-eyed dancer of the 1930s that Powell is best remembered. He married fellow singing actor June Allyson in 1945.

Further Reading:

Carpozi, George. *The Magnificent Entertainers*. New York, Manor Books, 1978.

Thomas, Tony. *The Dick Powell Story*. Burbank, Riverwood Press, 1993.