

# BETTY WHITE

(Betty Marion White Ludden)

Los Angeles, CA

## The "First Lady of Television"

*Globally beloved radio, film, stage, and television star known for capturing hearts and minds while pioneering cultural change both on- and off-screen. Avid champion of social causes, including animal welfare, racial equality, and LGBTQ+ rights, leveraging fame and influence to capture widespread attention for key issues.*

## Notable Achievements

- Consistently captured the hearts and minds of audiences over a seven-decade career (the TV industry's longest), seamlessly transitioning from radio to early television and maintaining a constant position at the forefront of popular media and culture.
- Known as the "First Lady of Television" and the "First Lady of Game Shows" for a career laden with industry firsts, including: first woman to produce a sitcom, first producer to hire a female director, and producer and host of the first American network variety TV show to feature an African American performer.
- Widely adored entertainer, with an astonishing 27 awards and 57 award nominations over her 70-year career.
- Constant champion of social causes despite potential career impacts; a vocal supporter and advocate for LGBTQ+, racial equality, and animal welfare issues.
- Notable shows: *The Hollywood Squares*, *The Bold and the Beautiful*, *The Carol Burnett Show*, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *The Golden Girls*.

## Entertainment Career Highlights

Multiple Companies

1949 – 2021

### Actress & Producer

Successfully transitioned from radio to television, pioneering countless media firsts as a celebrated industry trailblazer. Paved the way for the modern American television landscape, effortlessly introducing landscape-altering shifts while maintaining audience favor over a seven-decade career (the longest television career on record). Career highlights include:

- Guest Roles, Recurring Roles, Big Screen (1990 – 2009):** Maintained a central position in American TV and film as a frequent guest-star of widely popular talk and sketch shows, soap operas, commercials, and feature-length films.
  - Returned to film alongside Sandra Bullock and Ryan Reynolds in *The Proposal*, signaling the beginning of a 20-year resurgence which seamlessly integrated White into the modern film and TV landscape.
  - Appeared in Mars, Incorporated's *You're not you when you're hungry* Snickers bar campaign, capturing the attention and love of new audiences.
  - Became the oldest host of *Saturday Night Live* in 2010 at the age of 88.
  - Nominated for a Primetime Emmy (Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series) for *Hot in Cleveland*.
  - Contributed to the success of the highest-rated Hallmark Hall of Fame presentation, *The Lost Valentine* (Nielsen Media Research).
  - Hosted and executive produced *Betty White's Off Their Rockers*, a charming twist on the prank-show format, which received three Emmy nominations.
- The Golden Girls (1985 – 1992):** Received critical acclaim and Emmy nominations every year of the program's seven-season run as the much-loved character, Rose Nylund.
  - Earned a permanent spot on the American pop-culture landscape.
  - Demonstrated exceptional versatility, fully embodying the role of the "terminally naïve" Nylund in a major departure from prior characters.

- **Mama's Family (1983 – 1984):** Reprised a beloved character originated in sketches (*The Carol Burnett Show*).
- **The Mary Tyler Moore Show, The Carol Burnett Show, The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson (1973 – 1983):** Cemented her place in American audience's hearts as a frequent guest and returning character on groundbreaking and time-tested sitcoms and talk/variety shows.
  - Relaunched *The Betty White Show*, now the fourth iteration of the program, with a single season run.
  - Awarded second and third Emmy Awards as Sue Ann Nivens (*The Mary Tyler Moore Show*).
  - Notable appearances (TV shows, movies, and miniseries): *The Carol Burnett Show*, *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*, *With This Ring*, *The Best Place to Be*, *Before and After*, *The Gossip Columnist*.
- **First Lady of Game Shows (1960 – 1970):** Earned a name as a staple of network game and talk shows, appearing as a frequent guest on numerous high-viewership shows including Jack Paar and Johnny Carson's *The Tonight Show*.
  - Began a nearly 20-year run as a co-host and co-commentator (alongside Roy Neal and Lorne Greene) for NBC's annual *Rose Parade Broadcast*.
- **The Betty White Show (TV, 1952 – 1954 / 1957 – 1958):** Reimagined the talk/variety show for television, hosting and producing the daily live program while continuing to shape the future of American TV through multiple industry "firsts".
  - Paved the way once more for women in television as the first producer to hire a female director.
  - Featured, for the first time on an American network variety TV show, an African American performer – Arthur Duncan – amidst Jim Crow era America. Famously responded "I'm sorry. Live with it," in response to threats of boycotts among southern states, and subsequently increasing Duncan's airtime.
- **Co-founder of Bandy Productions (1949 – 1953):** Partnered with writer George Tibbles and producer Don Feddersen.
  - Capitalized on familiar sketch characters to create all-new TV shows with a ready-made viewership.
  - Broke new ground as one of the first women in TV to wield full creative control on screen and behind the camera.
  - Earned her first Emmy Award Nomination (Best Actress, 1951) and then win (Los Angeles Emmy Award, 1952).

Multiple Companies

1949 – 1953

### Radio Host & Personality

Earned a name as an engaging, witty, and dynamic entertainer through a range of commercials, radio shows, and an eponymous talk and variety program.

- Launched *The Betty White Show*, a radio talk and variety show which shared its name with three additional shows across media types over the following 70 years.

## Additional Highlights

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Multiple Companies/Publishers

### Author

Authored and published multiple fiction, autobiographical, and comedy books to great reception.

- Titles: *Betty & Friends: My Life at the Zoo*, 2011; *If You Ask Me (And of Course You Won't)*, 2011; *Together: A Novel of Shared Vision*, 2008; *Here We Go Again: My Life In Television*, 1995; *The Leading Lady: Dinah's Story*, 1991; *Betty White in Person*, 1987; *Betty White's Pet-Love: How Pets Take Care of Us*, 1983.

Multiple Organizations

### Advocate

A constant and vocal champion for social causes, including animal welfare, racial equality, and LGBTQ+ rights.

- Trustee and President Emerita of the Morris Animal Foundation, a nonprofit that invests in science to advance animal health (1971 – 2021).
- Member of the board of directors of the Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association (1974 – 2021).
- Recipient of the American Humane's National Humanitarian Medal and the Legacy Award (2012).

# Awards

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## American Comedy Awards

Funniest Female Guest Appearance in a TV Series (*Ally McBeal*), 2000 | Lifetime Achievement Award in Comedy, 1990

## Britannia Awards

Charlie Chaplin Britannia Award for Excellence in Comedy, 2010

## Disney Legends Awards

Disney Legend, 2009

## Emmy Awards, Daytime

Lifetime Achievement: Honored, 2015 | Outstanding Game Show Host (*Just Men!*), 1983

## Emmy Awards, Primetime

Outstanding Guest Actress in a Comedy Series (*Saturday Night Live*), 2010 | Outstanding Guest Actress in a Comedy Series (*The John Larroquette Show*), 1996 | Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series (*The Golden Girls*), 1986 | Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series (*The Mary Tyler Moore Show*), 1976 | Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series (*The Mary Tyler Moore Show*), 1975

## Regional Emmy Awards, Regional

Los Angeles Emmy Award for Outstanding Personality (*Life with Elizabeth*), 1952

## Hollywood Walk of Fame

Star on the Walk of Fame, 1995

## Honorary Awards

Life Achievement Award, 2010

## Gracie Allen Awards

Best Actress in a Comedy Series (*Hot in Cleveland*), 2011

## Grammy Awards

Best Spoken Word Recording (If You Ask Me [And of Course You Won't]), 2011

## Golden Apple Award

Female Star of the Year, 1986

## People's Choice Awards

TV Icon, 2015

## Screen Actors Guild Awards

Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Comedy Series (*Hot in Cleveland*), 2012 | Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Comedy Series (*Hot in Cleveland*), 2011

## Teen Choice Award

Best Dance (with Sandra Bullock) (*The Proposal*), 2010

## TV Land Award

Legend Award, 2015 | Pop Culture Award (*The Golden Girls*), 2008 | Groundbreaking Show (*The Mary Tyler Moore Show*), 2004 | Quintessential Non-Traditional Family (*The Golden Girls*), 2003

## UCLA Jack Benny Award

Comedian, 2011

## Viewers for Quality Television "Q" Awards

Best Actress in a Quality Comedy Series (*The Golden Girls*), 1988 | Best Actress in a Quality Comedy Series (*The Golden Girls*), 1987