



Bing Crosby and Bob Hope: The Golden Era of Hollywood's Most Popular Show Business Stars

Charles River Editors

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*Includes pictures.

*Includes Crosby and Hope's quotes about each other and their own lives and careers.

*Includes a bibliography for further reading.

“You never get tired unless you stop and take time for it.” – Bob Hope

“I think popular music in this country is one of the few things in the twentieth century that have made giant strides in reverse.” – Bing Crosby

In 1948, American polls rated Bing Crosby “the most admired man alive”, and it’s no surprise given how popular he was across every major form of entertainment during the decade. With a string of major hits, Crosby was the most popular singer in the country during that era, with classic songs like “White Christmas” helping pave the way for other singers as varied as Bob Hope, Dean Martin, and Frank Sinatra. In fact, young Sinatra modeled his clothing and style after Crosby, who was his idol growing up. And as good as he was at singing, Crosby’s work with radio technology helped pave the way for multitracking songs and making it possible to broadcast the same radio programs across the country without cutting another live version. All told, Crosby sold an estimated 500 million records in the 20th century.

In addition to being one of America’s most beloved singers and an accomplished radio presence, Crosby not only made popular movies but acted well enough to be critically acclaimed. His Road To... movie series with Bob Hope produced some of the best-selling movies of the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, and he won an Oscar for Best Actor in *Going My Way* (1944) by playing Father Chuck O’Malley. When he was nominated for the same role in the 1945 sequel *The Bells of St. Mary’s*, he became one of just 4 people nominated for two Oscars for playing the same role.

Of all the show business icons in American history, one of the most beloved was Bob Hope, whose career spanned over 6 decades across film, television, vaudeville, comedy, and touring and earned him too many accolades to count. On the day of his 100th birthday, more than half of the states in America declared it “Bob Hope Day”, a sign of just how monumental and influential he was as an entertainer. Along the way, he performed so many United Service Organization (USO) tours visiting troops that Congress made him the “first and only honorary veteran of the U.S. armed forces.” Incredibly, he was given honorary awards for his career at the Academy Awards nearly 40 years before his death, and decades before he actually retired from public life. By the time he reached his twilight, he was an instantly recognized institution unto himself. All of that would have been impressive for any American, let alone someone who was actually born in England with the name Leslie Townes Hope. Indeed, the quintessential American entertainer wouldn’t actually move to the country until he was 4, and while his English roots may have helped his impressive impersonation of Charlie Chaplin when Hope was merely a teen, he quickly became an American through and through. He later claimed he changed his first name to Bob because it had a folksy feel to it, and he definitely gave off that kind of aura throughout his 5 decades doing USO tours, his 4 decades making films, his television career of . In addition to his versatile career that ranged from Broadway to comedy, he was an accomplished athlete who once quipped that all of the money he made went towards his greens fees. In fact, Hope became notorious for carrying a golf club around, so much so that Stephen Colbert paid homage to him by carrying a golf club during his own USO performances in 2009.

Bing Crosby and Bob Hope examines the lives and careers of the two most popular show business

entertainers of the mid-20th century. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about both men like never before.

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