

Gay icons are lost in 2005

from page 14

in June, 1956, the two divorced after less than five years together. Miller was 89 at the time of his death.

February 21

Former '60s teen queen Sandra Dee

Sandra Dee passed away from kidney failure at the age of 63. At the height of her fame in the 1960s Dee was perhaps the biggest female teen idol of her time. She left behind a legacy of film roles that includes "Gidget" "Tammy and the Doctor," "Imitation of Life" and "Portrait in Black." Dee captured media attention again in her later years because of the movie "Beyond the Sea," which recalled her life with husband and singer Bobby Darren. Actor Kevin Spacey portrayed Darren, Kate Bosworth played Dee.

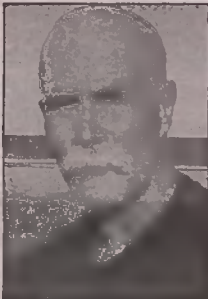


Queen of mean: Soap opera diva Ruth Warrick continued working on 'One Life to Live' up until a few days before her death at 89.

March 3

Composer Martin Denny

The father of the influential genre of pop called "exotica" died in his home in Hawaii at the age of 93. Denny created a hypnotic international sound that blended exotic elements — bird calls, croaking frogs, jazz rhythms, chimes and gongs.



He once described it as a fusion of Asian, South Pacific, American jazz, Latin American and classical styles. In the mid-1990s Denny experienced a rebirth of sorts when his music was rediscovered by a new generation and labeled the "cocktail lounge" sound.

March 21

Cabaret singer Bobby Short

Openly gay Cabaret singer Bobby Short, once described as "the tuxedoed embodiment of New York style and sophistication," was a fixture at his piano in the Carlyle Hotel for more than 35 years.

His career stretched over more than 70 years and included Grammy nominations for "You're the Top: Love Songs of Cole Porter" and "Late Night at the Cafe Carlyle." The 80-year-old Short died of leukemia at New York Presbyterian Hospital.

May 2

Writer and Activist Jack Nicholls

One of the original founders of the Mattachine Society, writer Jack Nicholls co-edited the pioneering weekly publication *Gay* from 1969 to 1973. He also wrote a number of cutting-edge books on gay male sexuality, including the early '70s tome "I Have More Fun With You Than Anybody," which chronicled his relationship with fellow writer and activist Lige Clark.

Nicholls, 67, died at Cape Canaveral Hospital of complications from cancer, a

disease he had been fighting for 20 years.

May 25

Filmmaker Ismail Merchant

Filmmaker Ismail Merchant, who with partner James Ivory produced such heralded dramas as "A Room With A View" and "Howards End," died at the age of 68 following an extended illness. The two men — partners in life and filmmaking — formed Merchant Ivory productions in 1963 and went on to produce many cinematic classics, such as "The Europeans," "Mr. and Mrs. Bridge," "The Bostonians," "Maurice" and "Slaves of New York." Merchant died surrounded by family and friends

at a hospital in London.

June 6

Activist and National Coming Out Day founder Jean O'Leary

Jean O'Leary, a nun-turned-lesbian activist who organized the first White House meeting of gay rights leaders and was one of the co-founders of National Coming Out Day, died of complications from lung cancer.

The 57-year-old O'Leary was diagnosed with cancer in September 2003. She died at the home of her partner of 12 years.

June 7

Actress Anne Bancroft



Anne Bancroft starred in the gay-themed cinema smash 'Torch Song Trilogy.'

Actress Anne Bancroft, the star of such films as "The Graduate," "The Miracle Worker" and "Torch Song Trilogy," died of uterine cancer. In recent years Bancroft appeared in such films as "G.I. Jane" and "The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone."

June 16

Composer David Diamond

Openly gay classical music composer David Diamond was one of the most gifted, colorful, and cantankerous creative figures in the world of music. As a young man in his 20s, Diamond was championed by many of the prominent musical figures of the 1940s — among them Maurice Ravel and Joseph Szigeti. Among the many conductors who presented his works were Leopold Stokowski, Pierre Monteux, Dimitri Mitropoulos and Serge Koussevitzky. One of Diamond's strongest advocates for many years was another gay man — Leonard Bernstein, who led the premieres of Diamond's Fourth Symphony in Boston and his Fifth and Eighth in New York. Diamond, 89, died of congestive heart failure.

see 2005 on 18



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