Millie Yates Lambert

Clan Solomon

Lamberts of Valparaiso & Hollywood

Solomon > Samuel Munson > Ruth Munson > Mary Van Cleef > Gerardus Ryker > Maherza Ryker > Fayette Yates > Samuel Yates > Millie Yates m. Basil G. Lambert



Professor Lambertini with Rita Hayworth

Oh, those days of vaudeville. When the jokes were corny and the acts were as varied as the days of the year. Jugglers, magicians, singers, dancers, comics, pet tricks—you name it, and you could find it in vaudeville.

Basil G. Lambert, who was from Valpairaso, Indiana, met Millie Yates in Los Angeles. Millie's family was also originally from Indiana. Basil was divorced. He and Millie married in 1931, and soon after, their first child, Colleen, was born, then their son, Michael. The couple had a home in Valparaiso. They also had a home in Hollywood, three drive-in restaurants, and a 50-foot schooner. They once owned a sprawling Pasadena home built by Red Skelton. How did this unassuming man get to this place?

Mild-mannered Basil had another incarnation—Professor Lamberti, the crazy, seltzer-water squirting, xylophone playing vaudevillian. And he was popular!

He began his career at age eight and was on the road at nine. By 15, he had taken up acrobatics and joined the circus.Two years before WWI, he picked up the drums and worked in the pit. He enlisted in 1917 and, after he returned to civilian life, rejoined an orchestra. He picked up the xylophone in 1920. He worked the Keith-Orpheum circuit and spent almost a year working at Billy Rose's Diamond Horseshoe.



He was an expert at slapstick, tickling the physical, rather than the auditory funny bone. His tux was too big and his legs limber. He was old-fashioned silly. This allowed his family to tour in Europe and hundreds of cities in the U.S. as the lead act. His fame grew, and he even appeared in two Hollywood films.

Still, Basil preferred life at home in Englewood with Millie and the kids. He passed away in 1950 after an illness of a year. Millie lived until 2005, outliving both of her children.

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