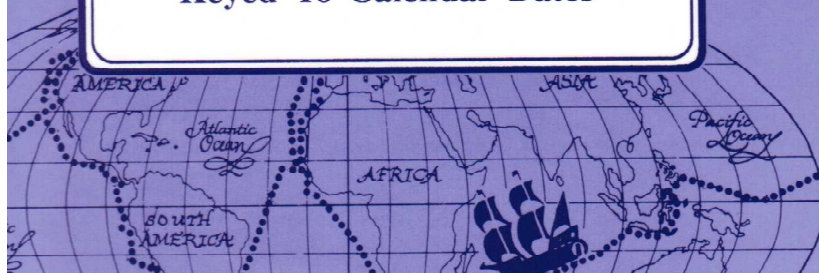
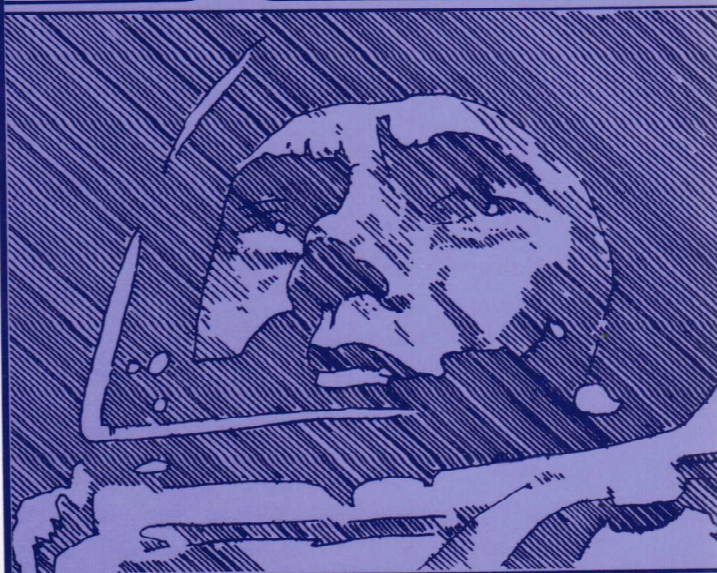


# BOOK OF DAYS 1988

An  
Encyclopedia  
Of Information Sources On  
Historical Figures And Events,  
Keyed To Calendar Dates

*John Hancock*  
*Robt Morris* *Lewis*  
*Samuel Rush* *Samuel*  
*Franklin*





### Discussion and Project Suggestions:

1) Read Stanislavski's three works on acting and then formulate for yourself the principle tenets of his "method" or "system."

2) Which style or styles of acting did Stanislavski reject in developing his own system?

3) Is the Stanislavski method still dominant today? If not, what newer methods have superseded it?

### Sources of Further Information:

American Center for Stanislavski Theatre Arts (ACSTA)  
485 Park Avenue, 6th Floor  
New York, NY 10022  
(212) 755-5120  
Sonia Moore, President

### Cross-Reference Dates:

5 January 1863: Stanislavski was born in Moscow.

5 July 1889: Stanislavski married Maria Petrovna Perevoshchikova (stage name: Lilina).

22 June 1897: Stanislavski formed Moscow Art Theater, with Vladimir I. Nemirovich-Danchenko.

14 October 1898: The Moscow Art Theater first performed Alexei Konstantinovich Tolstoy's *Tsar Fyodor*.

8 January 1923-2 June 1923: Moscow Art Theater's first tour of the United States.

9 November 1923 through 11 May 1924: Moscow Art Theater's second tour of the United States.

This resource guide has been prepared by Joyce Vining Morgan, Teacher of Russian, Exeter Area Junior and Senior High Schools, Exeter, New Hampshire. Dr. Morgan is the author of *Stanislavski's Encounter with Shakespeare: The Evolution of a Method*.

### Other Events on this Day:

1848: Augustus Saint-Gaudens died in Cornish, New Hampshire. (Please see the guide on March 1.)

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August 8

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(65 years ago)

Esther Williams, 1923-

by Alison Osinski

On 8 August 1923, Esther Williams, the "personification of synchronized swimming," was born in Los Angeles, California, the youngest of five children. She grew up playing in the surf and learning to swim in the ocean. Williams attended the University of Southern California where she participated on the swim team. She won the Women's Outdoor Nationals in the 100 meter freestyle, and

50 and 100 meter breaststroke. She also competed as a member of the world record breaking medley relay team. Williams won the right to swim in three events on the 1940 US Olympic team, but unfortunately never got the chance to compete because the Olympics were cancelled when war broke out in Europe. Instead, Williams turned professional, and went to work doing five performances a day for Billy Rose as a star in his San Francisco World's Fair Aquacade. She co-starred in the Aquacade with Olympic champion Johnny Weismuller, who later went on to portray Tarzan in films. The Aquacade was a very unpleasant experience for Williams, and soured her towards show business.

After repeatedly turning down offers from MGM to work in films, because of her experiences at the Aquacade and because of her husband, Dr. Leonard Kover's, objections to her going into show business, she went with Johnny Hyde from the William Morris agency to meet L. B. Mayer. She signed with MGM in 1941. MGM used the popular *Andy Hardy* series to give exposure to their new contract player, Esther Williams, and introduce her to loyal audiences. She was a star in her own right by 1944, in her fourth film *Bathing Beauty*.

MGM developed a special kind of film for Williams, which showed off her aquatic talents. She was admired for the way she made everything she did look so easy. She smiled throughout the films, even when performing dangerous Busby Berkly stunts. Her hair which was pulled tight, pinned into place, and slicked back with Vaseline, never appeared to get wet. Williams went on to act in twenty-seven feature length films and one short subject film between 1942 and 1961. Although sometimes criticized for her lack of acting ability and training, Williams was adored by her fans. She was voted one of the top ten money making stars in the Motion Pictures Herald-Fame poll, and in 1953, was elected by the Foreign Press as the most popular female performer in fifty countries.

Williams' second husband was the radio announcer, Ben Gage, with whom she had three children. In 1967, she married former co-star Fernando Lamas, and retired from public life. By this time she believed that they were not making her kind of films anymore. Lamas, too, preferred that she quit the movie business, because location problems, and not seeing each other for extended periods of time would not be healthy for their marriage. Williams devoted her life to Lamas and became the traditional Latin wife and homemaker. They went to live in Spain for a year and a half where she came to understand his culture and upbringing. She learned to cook Argentinian specialties, garden and sew.

In 1982, after Lamas died of cancer, and after being out of the limelight for over twenty years, Williams decided to get involved again. She agreed to an interview by Barbara Walters, in which she refuted numerous rumors which had arisen surrounding her absence from public life. She made a videotape demonstrating her method of teaching infants to swim. She made local TV appearances.

Williams is often credited with having helped promote swimming as a sport and recreational activity in the US, as well as being instrumental in the dramatic increase in the number of pools being built in the US. Her success, popularity and world-wide promotion of synchronized swimming are partially responsible for its inclusion in 1984 as an Olympic sporting event.



#### Reference Sources:

- *The Best of MGM*, by Elizabeth Miles Montgomery. New York: Gallery Books, W. H. Smith Publishers, 1986. Illustrated history of stars and the movies they made at Metro Goldwyn Mayer.
- *A Bibliographical Dictionary of Film*, 2nd rev. ed., by David Thompson. New York: William Morris & Company, 1981. A cross referenced, alphabetically listed bibliography of film stars.
- *An Actor's Guide to the Talkies*, by Richard Dimmitt. Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1968. Comprehensive listing of films, actors and actresses, film production companies, and film release dates for feature films from 1949 to 1964.
- *Movie Stars of the '40s*, by David Ragan. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1985. Short bibliographic summaries and listings of movie highlights of stars first famous, most active or most popular in the 1940s.
- *5001 Nights at the Movies: A Guide from A to Z*, by Pauline Kael. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1982. Kael reviews five Esther Williams films.
- *The Oxford Companion to Film*, edited by Liz-Anne Bawden. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976. Short bibliographic film summaries and topics of related interest.
- *International Motion Picture Almanac*, edited by Richard Gertner. New York: Quigley Publishing Company, 1981.

#### Works by Williams:

- "How Esther Williams Teaches Children to Swim," by Esther Williams as told to Helen Gould. *Family Circle* (June 1956): 24-25, 58-59. Photographs and step-by-step progression showing how Williams taught her three young children to swim. The *Swim Baby Swim* video is based on information originally presented in this article.

#### Adult Works about the Subject:

- *The Movies*, rev. ed., by Richard Griffith and Arthur Mayer. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1970. Insiders' history of the movies from their birth in Hollywood through the sixties. Esther Williams is mentioned in the chapter "Blood, Sweat, Tears...and Profits," about movies made during World War II.
- *Whatever Happened to Hollywood?*, by Jesse Lasky, Jr. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1975. History of Hollywood as told by the son of a Hollywood pioneer. Mentions the contribution and importance of Esther Williams to MGM.

#### Young Adult Works about the Subject:

- *Synchronized Swimming*, by Helen Elkington and Jane Chamberlain. North Pomfrit, VT: David & Charles, 1986. Introduction to the sport of synchronized swimming.
- *US Synchronized Swimming Official Rule Book '87-'88*, edited by US Synchronized Swimming. Indianapolis, IN: USSS, 1987. Official rules by which synchronized swim competition is governed in the US.

#### Children's Works about the Subject:

- *Synchronized Swimming Is for Me*, by Susan Preston-Mauks. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 1983. Preston-Mauks, a former Physical Education teacher, synchronized participant and coach explains how to get involved in the sport of synchronized swimming.

#### Feature Films:

- *Andy Hardy's Double Life*, directed by George Seitz. (MGM, 1942). Williams' film debut. Minor supporting role in which Williams kisses Rooney underwater.
- *Bathing Beauty*, directed by George Sidney. (MGM, 1944). Color 16mm available from MGM/United. 101 min. Williams' fourth movie and first starring role. Lavish musical-comedy. Plot revolves around the misadventures which occur when Red Skelton enrolls at a women's college.
- *Ziegfeld Follies*, directed by Vincent Minnelli. (MGM, 1946). Color 16mm and videotape available from MGM/United. 110 min. Williams didn't say a word in this film. Musical review in which Ziegfeld, as played by William Holden, introduces fabulous routines from heaven.
- *Neptune's Daughter*, directed by Edward Buzzell. (MGM, 1949). Color 16mm available from MGM/United. 93 min. Williams plays a bathing suit designer and sings the Academy Award winning song "Baby It's Cold Outside." Considered by many to be her best film.
- *Take Me Out to the Ball Game*, [alternate title: *Everybody's Cheering*], directed by Busby Berkeley. (MGM, 1949). Color 16mm available from MGM/United. 93 min. Williams manages a baseball team which includes team members Gene Kelly and Frank Sinatra. Williams falls in love with Kelly, while Sinatra falls in love with Williams. Gangsters try to fix a game.
- *Million Dollar Mermaid*, [alternate title: *The One Piece Bathing Suit*], directed by Mervyn Leroy. (MGM, 1952). Color 16mm available from MGM/United. 115 min. Two Busby Berkeley staged sequences were excerpted for *That's Entertainment!* Particularly well remembered sequence involving sparklers and Williams wearing a gold swim suit rising out of the water on a geyser.
- *Dangerous When Wet*, directed by Charles Walters. (MGM, 1953). Color 16mm available from MGM/United. 95 min. Williams portrays a young midwestern swimmer who seeks fame and fortune by swimming the English Channel. Met and starred with future husband, Fernando Lamas.
- *Easy to Love*, directed by Charles Walters. (MGM, 1953). Color available from MGM/United. 96 min. Series of Busby Berkeley spectacular production numbers set at Cypress Gardens. Williams learned to water-ski for her role in this film.
- *The Big Show*, directed by James Clark. (20th Century Fox, 1961). Color 16mm available from Willough by Peer. 113 min. Family conflict drama set in a circus. Williams retired after this film.



### Other Audio-Visual Resources:

- *The Screen Actor*. (1950).  
Only a short subject film made by Esther Williams.
- *Classical Splash*. (US Synchronized Swimming, 1983, 1984, 1985). Videotape available from US Synchronized Swimming Merchandise. 90 min.  
Special event promoted by US Synchronized Swimming. Held in 1983, 1984, and 1985 at Colorado Springs Olympic Training Center. National synchronized teams accompanied by a live symphony orchestra.
- *1984 Olympics (Synchronized Swimming)*. (1984). Videotape available from US Synchronized Swimming Merchandise. 120 min.  
Highlights of the coverage of synchronized swim competition from the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games. Esther Williams is the commentator.
- *1985 FINA World Cup*. (US Synchronized Swimming, 1985). Videotape available from US Synchronized Swimming Merchandise. 90 min.  
The world's top athletes compete in solo, duet and team competition. Held in Indianapolis at IUPUI Natatorium.
- *Swim Baby Swim*. (E. W. L. Productions/Karl Home Video, 1984). Videotape. 60 min.  
Esther Williams' five step approach to making babies water safe and secure through water adjustment and the teaching of safety, survival and early swimming skills.

### Discussion and Project Suggestions:

- 1) Find Esther Williams' star on the Hollywood walk of Fame.
- 2) Stand in Esther Williams' footprints in cement at Mann's Chinese Theater.
- 3) Visit the International Swimming Hall of Fame in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.
- 4) Attend a synchronized swim meet at a local pool.

### Sources of Further Information:

Esther Williams Swimming Pools and Spas  
8600 River Road  
Delair, NJ 08112  
(609) 663-2900

International Swimming Hall of Fame  
One Hall of Fame Drive  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33316  
(305) 462-6536  
Don R. DeBolt, Executive Director

Lee Mimms & Associates  
1223 1/4 North Sweetzer  
Los Angeles, CA 90069  
(213) 656-3801

### Cross-Reference Dates:

21 April 1959: Williams was divorced from movie producer Ben Gage.

This resource guide has been prepared by Dr. Alison Osinski, Aquatic Consulting Services, and, Assistant Professor and Aquatic Specialist, Department of Physical Education, San Diego State University.

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August 9

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(140 years ago)

## The Free-Soil Party, 1848-1854

by Frederick J. Blue and Amy Kyte

On 9 August 1848, 20,000 excited Northerners gathered in Buffalo, New York, to inaugurate the most significant experiment in third-party politics in American history to that time, the Free-Soil Party. Those present were committed to the Wilmot Proviso—the concept of containing slavery and not permitting it to expand into the newly acquired Mexican War territories. The Proviso was the proposal of Congressman David Wilmot of Pennsylvania, a member of the antislavery faction of the Democratic Party. The concept of containing slavery was opposed by many members of both the Democratic and the Whig Parties, not only Southerners, but also large numbers of Northerners who preferred to avoid the issue rather than cause a sectional confrontation. Included among the Proviso's opponents was President James K. Polk of Tennessee, the leader of Wilmot's party.

As a purely northern organization, the Free-Soil Party brought the abolitionist Liberty Party together with antislavery elements of the Democratic and Whig Parties. The Buffalo delegates chose former President Martin Van Buren as their candidate for president and Charles Francis Adams of Massachusetts for vice-president, and forced the issue of preventing the expansion of slavery on voters who were not yet ready to accept a sectional antislavery party. The major participants in addition to Van Buren and Charles Francis Adams included Salmon P. Chase, Charles Sumner, and John P. Hale, who was to be the party's candidate for president in 1852.

Each of these participants was motivated by varying degrees of commitment to antislavery principle on the one hand and to practical politics on the other. Although each realized the party had little immediate chance of victory, each knew that the cause of antislavery would be advanced by a strong showing. Former President Martin Van Buren was especially concerned with punishing the Democratic Party, which he had led to victory in 1836 and to defeat in 1840. When Democrats rejected him in 1844 and instead nominated Polk, the former President had accepted his defeat gracefully as a loyal Democrat. Van Buren's feelings changed, however, when Polk denied his supporters patronage positions in his administration, and when the party seemingly favored a rival New York Democratic faction to his own, because of that rival's rejection of the Proviso. Van Buren, in bolting the Democrats and agreeing to lead the Free-Soilers in 1848, gained the revenge he sought, knowing that Free-Soil votes would probably cause the Whigs to triumph over his former party. Charles Francis