Fabares, Shelley (1944-) Encyclopedia Article

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In 1958, when Shelley Fabares was cast as Mary Stone in television's *The Donna Reed Show* at the age of 14, she was already an acting veteran. Born in Santa Monica, California, this niece of actress Nanette Fabray had been working in movies and on television since childhood, but it was as Mary Stone that she established her image as the ideal teenager: pretty, perky, smart, and sweet. After four years of the show's five-year run, its producer (and Donna Reed's husband) Tony Owen persuaded Fabares to record "Johnny Angel" and she lip-synched the tune on an episode in January 1962. By March, the single had climbed to number one on Billboard's Hot 100 chart, and eventually sold over three million copies. Shelley Fabares grew up on *The Donna Reed Show* and, as Mary, went away to college. In real life, she moved to the movies, donning a bikini to co-star with Fabian in *Ride the Wild Surf* (1964), and played leading lady to Elvis Presley in *Girl Happy* (1965), *Spinout* (1966), and *Clambake* (1967)—the only actress to do so three times—but her big-screen career never fulfilled the promise of her teenage years. Fabares continued to appear in a number of TV roles through the 1980s and 1990s, most notably as one of the central characters on the popular ABC comedy *Coach.*

Further Reading:

Bartel, Pauline. *Reel Elvis! The Ultimate Trivia Guide to the King's Movies.* Dallas, Taylor Publishing Company, 1994.

Fultz, Jay. *In Search of Donna Reed.* Iowa City, University of Iowa Press, 1998.

Geri, Brian. Liner notes for *The Best of Shelley Fabares.* Rhino Records R2 71651, 1994.

"Teens are Looking At … [Shelley Fabares]," *Seventeen.* November 1962, 52.