



Silverlands: Growing Up at the Actors' Orphanage, A Memoir

Judy Staber

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Judy Staber was born into a theatrical family in London during World War II. After certain family upheavals, her mother placed Judy, not quite four, and her sister, seven, at The Actors' Orphanage in Chertsey, a town in Surrey south of London. She was to remain there for twelve and a half years. When she was eleven, her mother immigrated to Canada; her sister went a year later. Eventually, she, too, came to America at sixteen when the orphanage closed and all her childhood friends were scattered around the world. This is the story of her childhood and about the Actors' Orphanage, a story touched by the glamour of the theatre and such notables as Noel Coward, Laurence Olivier and Richard Attenborough, but also filled with the sadness that comes when families are torn apart by ill fortune and careers. It is the story of resilient children who weren't orphans but were orphaned for a time by their parents' profession -- The Theatre; and of how members of that profession took care of their own and still do today through The Actors' Charitable Trust. The Actors' Orphanage was a unique institution, and childhood at Silverlands was different from the norm: for some it was too different, but for Judy it was the only childhood she knew, and she thrived and grew there. Judy Staber has worked in the visual and performing arts for all her American life. With her children and grandchildren grown, she lives in upstate New York with her husband, John, a pilot and flight instructor, where she writes, does volunteer theatre work and curates an art gallery. Find out more at jstaber.com.

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