

Bing Crosby's Reunion With Sons Big Event of Past Year

Editor's note: For years, the Crosby family has been the public impression of being a happy, carefree family. But recently, the image has undergone considerable blurring. Like other parents, Bing and his brother Bob have had serious problems with their rebellious offspring. And Bob got into an almost tragic fight with his wife that made purple headlines.

This is the first of two dispatches on what's wrong with the Crosby's. It tells of Bing's fight to win back his sons after deciding he had failed them badly.

By RICK DU BROW
UPI Hollywood Writer
Hollywood — (UPI) — No Academy Award could match the prize that Bing Crosby won in 1959.

For that was the year he regained the confidence of the four sons he thought he had failed as a father — although not even he could prevent their hot Irish tempers from causing continuous arguing among themselves.

To win his boys back, Bing had to tarnish the illusion — built up over three decades — that he was a happy-go-lucky fellow untouched by the usual run of human problems.

But, said a friend, he felt it was worth any sacrifice—even losing face — to heal the family breach.

Failure Believed
Thus, although Hollywood had heard rumbles for some time, the public was taken aback in March when Bing told an interviewer:

"I think I failed them (the boys) by giving them too much work and discipline, too much money and too little time and attention. . . . It seems that maybe we got out of the habit of communicating. You've got to get kids talking to you. . . . I never had much success talking with mine."

This was Bing's opening gambit for peace, and three of his sons — Dennis, Philip and

Lindsay — made a verbal truce right then and there by rushing to his defense.

Said Philip: "Pop's done a wonderful job, considering what he had to work with."

Only Gary, 26 — Bing's oldest son — held out. He remained silent.

Some Reasons
Why the silence? Why the bitterness? And how did it start in the first place? Here are some of the reasons according to Hollywood insiders:

—All the boys were deeply attached to their late mother, Dixie Lee Crosby, and a coolness developed when Bing married 23-year-old actress Kathie Grant in 1957.

—Gary, nearly half a year older than Kathie, was especially cool. And it was reported he had sharp words with her when she put his mother's mementoes into storage.

—Lindsay's 1958 Christmas presents to Bing, Kathie and their baby son were returned because he decided to spend the holiday with Gary in Las Vegas, Nev., instead of with his father.

—Gary, who is very close to Lindsay, seethed over the incident.

—Gary criticized "all that propaganda Pop spread about us wanting to be ranchers. You remember all that business about us working 12½ hours a day at 33 1/3 cents an hour. We always wanted to be in show business."

Bing discreetly remained silent to Gary's criticisms. Instead, he began seeing more and more of Dennis, Philip and Lindsay — going to baseball games and other affairs with them.

Dad Was in Hock
His own boyhood explained why he had worked his sons on his ranch — why, perhaps,

he had given them "too much work and discipline."

"My dad (a bookkeeper for a pickle factory) was in hock most of the time," he said. "We soon found out that there wasn't a lot of money on hand for baseball bats or sodas or anything else. Whatever we got, we earned."

Bing's desire to handle his troubles with his sons quietly stemmed partly from the fact that he had expected problems after Dixie Lee died.

"Now that their mother's gone," he said in 1954, "you have to know what they're doing, where they're going. They're normal active young men, and if you don't take care of them, they might get in trouble."

But the crooner's main problem in reconciling with his sons was Gary's touchy, hot temper. In October, 1958, Gary had a scrap with a business executive at a party honoring poet Carl Sandburg.

Last August, when he and his brothers were doing their act at the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas, Nev., he tried unsuccessfully to have a publicity man fired for letting a reporter talk to him about his feud with his father.

And in the act, Gary referred to his father as "Kathryn Grant's husband" and cracked: "We haven't received so much applause since we told Pop were were leaving home."

Gary To Miss Show
In addition, the younger boys looked up to Gary — at least they did until months later in Montreal where their differences with him broke up the act, perhaps only temporarily. Now, Lindsay, Dennis and Philip are scheduled to appear on their dad's TV show Feb. 29, but Gary will be missing — throat trouble, it was explained.

The boys' maternal grandfather, Evan Wyatt, had said after their Las Vegas opening: "Gary is the leader — always will be. The younger ones look up to him for leadership, and he's more than happy to take charge."

Bing, aware of Gary's influence at the time, continued to carry his peacepipe. In an interview, he noted that his sons were "all doing nicely as entertainers" and that "it may help my prestige around them a little if I can do a good job in their field."

"Besides," he said, "the boys have all grown too big and carry too much thunder, and I don't duck too good any more."

The reconciliation with Gary finally came in October of the day Bing's first daughter, Marie Frances, was baptized. Bing made Lindsay the baby's godfather, and friends of Gary said he felt this wiped out what he considered his father's insult to Lindsay the previous Christmas.

Wanted Invitation
The night of the baptism, Bing caught his sons' show for the first time at the Moulin Rouge nightclub here. He had never seen the act before because he refused to attend unless Gary invited him.

After the show, he went backstage, conferred with the boys privately for 20 minutes — and when a photographer asked for pictures, Gary smilingly threw his arm around his father's shoulder.

For Bing, the reunion with his sons — however shaky — was the end of a long road that might have caused other stars to lose public support. But the crooner, as usual, handled matters typically in an un-Hollywood manner which once prompted an admirer to write:

"Bing . . . is so darned easy for all of us to identify with. He talks our language. He sings our songs. His kids got into scrapes as ours did."

"He likes baseball and golf and wishes he could pick winning horses. He whistles. He goes to church on Sunday and his conscience pinches over what happened to his good intentions the rest of the week."

(Next: Bob and his daughter.)



CROSBY AND SONS—Crooner Bing Crosby and Dennis, Crosby had visited his sons at by wearing hat, is shown with his four sons, a Hollywood night club where they were left to right, Phillip, Lindsay, Gary, rear, performing. —(UPI Telephone)

BUTTON CHORES
New York — An average person handles between 20 and 30 buttons each day in putting on or taking off clothing.

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The Family Council

Editor's Note: The Family Council consists of a Judge, a psychiatrist, three clergymen, a newspaper editor, a women's editor and two writers. Each article is a summary of an actual case history. The Council reports on problems that have been dealt with by responsible agencies and counselors.

Mr. J.H. — I want nothing more to do with my son and his wife.

Keith H. — We're the ones who ought to be sore.

Mr. J.H. — My son, Keith, is 28 and has been married four years to a girl my wife and I never liked. We saw from the beginning that she was spoiled.

We sure were right. Six months ago Keith came to me and told me he was up to his ears in trouble because his wife had bought thousands of dollars worth of clothing and furniture on charge accounts. He has been trying for years to keep up with her spending, but couldn't any more. He told me they were breaking up and I offered to help him out financially to get him out of debt.

And now comes the climax! They are back together, all lovey-dovey. I am disgusted and I want nothing more to do with them.

Keith H. — My wife and I are the ones who shouldn't have anything more to do with my parents. Yet I am willing to be friends and let bygones be bygones.

My parents were always very cold to Ada and hurt her in many ways. When I told my father about her spending, he went on a rampage against her and called her the worst names. Later, when I started to see the whole situation more calmly I realized made good sense. It was a lot to spend at one time, but she had managed to get some good buys.

In a couple of months I will have paid back every cent my father lent me and I feel he has no right to hold a grudge against me or Ada.

The Council: Two wrongs were committed here and, of course, they don't add up to a right — for either side.

Keith had no business going to his father complaining of his wife's conduct. He came to his father in the spirit of a child who has been hurt in the big, bad world outside his home.

Even if he desperately needed financial help or advice from his father, he could have gone about it in a calm, reasonable way and then presenting his problems in a manner which would leave no opening for his father's "rampage" against his wife.

On the other hand, it was up to Mr. J.H. to keep his own head when his son came to him in an obviously hysterical mood. He seems to have so much hostility toward his daughter-in-law that he used the occasion to let it loose — rather than to help his son deal with his problems on a more rational level.

Most well-meaning, clear-minded individuals make it a policy never to get involved in anybody else's disputes, es-

pecially those between husband and wife. This is certainly sound because each person seeks support in his fight against the other. Each tries to put his own position in the best possible light, slurs his own sins and exaggerates those of his opponent. The only way an outsider can help is by acting pretty much the way a psychiatrist or marriage counselor would — refusing to take sides but listening and asking questions that will help the individual see his own error and solution.

This kind of objectivity is certainly difficult for anyone as emotionally involved as these parents. We suggest that they accept their son's marriage with good grace and let him jump the hurdles on his own.

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Grange News

Live Oak Grange
Live Oak Grange held its first meeting of the new year recently. All officers who had not previously been installed were installed.

All officers were present. They are Master Frank Hall, Overseer Fred Dengler, Lecturer Jessie Frantz, Steward Lloyd Smith, Assistant Steward Raymond Frantz, Chaplain Maude Deager, Treasurer Bethel Potter, Secretary Belle Strahan, Gate Keeper Lee Pratt, Ceres Betty Frantz, Pomona Lillian Rowilson, Flora Cassie Golding, Lady Assistant Steward Esther Fabrick, and members of the executive committee, Letsy Miller, Carl Christenson and Philip Strahan.

Reports of standing committees were given, and the names of 22 candidates were presented.

Permission for use of the hall was given for the community March of Dimes dinner which tentatively is scheduled Jan. 30. Community service is one of the tenets of the order.

Lecturer Frantz presented a program consisting of group singing, a guessing game, selected readings and New Year's resolutions by the members.

Refreshments were served by Lula Trotter, Lillian Rowilson, Edith Osborne and Marcia Brown.

PAYS SITTER FEE
Whitchurch, Wales — (UPI) — An insurance agent charged with stealing from a prospective woman customer was ordered to pay a dollar for a babysitter while the victim appeared in court.

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<p>Sauerkraut 29¢ LARGE 22-OZ. JAR</p>	<p>ALL CENTER LEAN Pork Chops 79¢ lb. FANCY EASTERN PORK</p>	<p>Boneless Pork Loin Roast 79¢ lb. FANCY EASTERN PORK</p>	<p>Fresh Ground 'CHOICE' STEER BEEF 39¢ lb OR 10 lbs. \$3.75</p>

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