

AN ALTERNATE ENDING?  
NO JUDY GARLAND?  
A MUNCHKIN SUICIDE?

**WIZARD OF OZ MYTHS**  
Fact vs. Fiction!

# closer



Husband Bobby Darin Shared Her Pain

George & Brad

**INSIDE 10 CELEB FRIENDSHIPS**

Lily & Jane

**'SHE REALLY, REALLY WANTED TO DIE'**  
—FRIENDS & FAMILY TELL ALL

Buddy Hackett  
LOVE, LAUGHS & LEGENDARY PARTIES!

Sandra Dee

# DESTROYED BY HER MOTHER

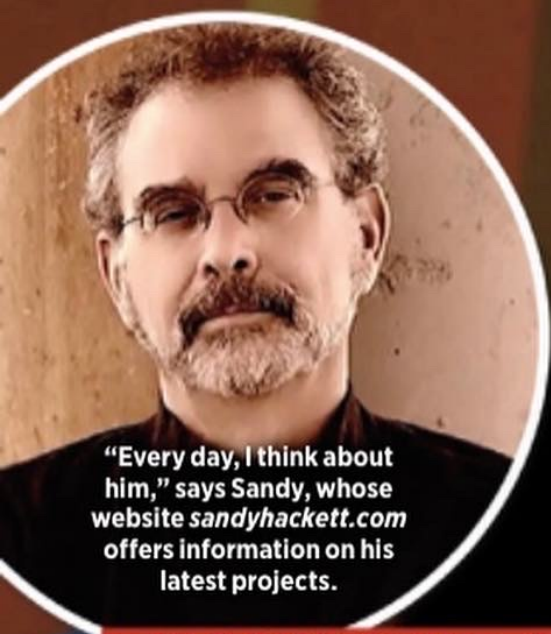
Years of horrific abuse led to a lifetime of heartbreak and alcoholism, but the *Gidget*

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"Every day, I think about him," says Sandy, whose website [sandyhackett.com](http://sandyhackett.com) offers information on his latest projects.

**BUDDY HACKETT'S  
SON REMEMBERS**

*He Was*  
**MY  
BEST  
FRIEND**

COMEDIAN SANDY  
HACKETT SHARES SWEET  
STORIES AND THE LESSONS  
HE LEARNED FROM HIS  
FAMOUS FATHER



**F**unnyman Buddy Hackett took fatherhood seriously. The doting dad of three kids was “well-read, smart and a strict disciplinarian,” recalls his son, Sandy Hackett. “At 16, I got a speeding ticket, and Dad wouldn’t let me drive for 30 days. He said, ‘Walk, get a ride, bicycle, take the bus. I don’t care.’” Later, Buddy outfitted Sandy’s car with a new set of wheels and quipped, “If you’re going to drive that fast, you’ll need better tires.”

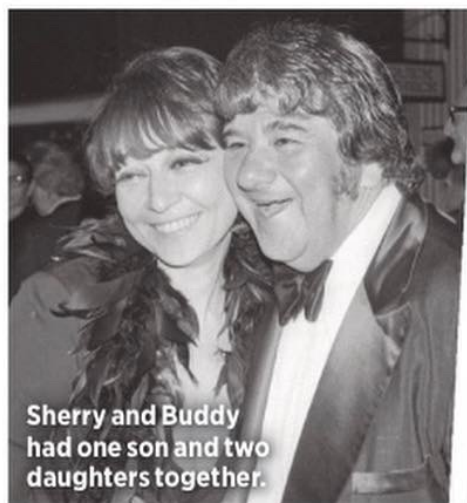
A protective papa by nature, Buddy didn’t just look out for his own children. Once, at the end of a film shoot in communist Hungary, he helped his 18-year-old driver escape by hiding him in the trunk of a car! “That kid came to live with us, and my father put him through Columbia University,” Sandy tells *Closer*.

Born in Brooklyn, Buddy got his start in the Catskills, working as a tummler — a merrymaker tasked with entertaining resort guests. He studied acting and did stand-up unsuccessfully before fine-tuning his act and slaying audiences with his expressive face, cartoonish voice and raunchy jokes. After making his mark in LA, he returned to headline in the Catskills, where he met Sherry Dubois. They married and stayed together for 48 years.

### HAPPIEST AT HOME

Though busy with tour dates and TV and movie roles, Buddy always made time for family. Skiing and golf were favorite pastimes, and famous friends often tagged along. “Lucille Ball and Gary Morton had a condo near ours in Snow Mass, Colo., and we hung out,” Sandy explains.

At home in Beverly Hills, the Hacketts enjoyed entertaining and regularly hosted luncheons



Sherry and Buddy had one son and two daughters together.



Buddy was part of the all-star cast of 1963’s *It’s a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*.



Phyllis Diller once said that you knew you had finally arrived as a comedian when you were invited to one of Buddy and Sherry’s famous luncheons.

**“I have the gift of laughter. I can make people laugh... And that I don’t question. It was a gift from God.”**

—Buddy Hackett

for a veritable who’s who of comedy. “Every six months, my mother cooked incredible meals for about 20 comedians like George Burns, Danny Thomas, Bob Newhart and Don Rickles,” Sandy recounts. “The comedians would tell stories,

and we’d laugh for hours. My mother wanted to record the get-togethers, but my father wouldn’t let her. She finally got everybody outside to take a picture in the driveway.”

### LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

For Buddy, comedy had been a great career path. “I like what I do,” he told Dick Cavett in 1980. But he didn’t want his son to follow in his footsteps. “He was really against it. He just knew how tough it was,” says Sandy. “When I told him I got a job as a stand-up comedian, tears welled up in his eyes. He asked, ‘What last name are you using?’ I said, ‘Hackett.’ He said, ‘Why? All these years I spent building up the name, I’d hate to see you @#\$\$% it up in one outing.’ He was crying, and we were both laughing. My dad was my greatest resource and best friend.” —*Hilary Hattenbach, with reporting by Natalie Posner*