

Colin Firth spent early childhood in Nigeria

Posted on Mar 02, Posted by [Ken Beck](#) Category [Ask Ken Beck](#)

Dear Ken: Tell us a bit about Colin Firth, who was nominated for a best actor Oscar for his role as King George VI in “The King’s Speech.”

Firth, 50, was born in Grayshott, England, but lived from the age of two weeks to 4 years old in Nigeria (three of his grandparents were missionaries). His father taught history at Winchester University College, and his mother taught comparative religions at the Open University. Married, he has three children. The actor is a strong supporter of Survival International, an organization that defends the rights of tribal peoples. Among his other acting credits are “Valmont,” “Pride and Prejudice,” “The English Patient,” “Bridget Jones’s Diary,” “Nanny McPhee,” “Mamma Mia!” and “Dorian Gray.” He has completed the film “Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy,” a thriller which will be released at the end of the year.

Dear Ken: Who was the actress that played Ernest T. Bass’ girlfriend Romeena Ankrum on “The Andy Griffith Show”?

That’s the delightful Jackie Joseph, 77, who was a co-star of “The Doris Day Show” in the early 1970s and who also appeared as a guest on dozens of TV shows such as “Dr. Kildare,” “McHale’s Navy,” “Hogan’s Heroes” and “Full House” and was in the movies “With Six You Get Eggroll,” “The Cheyenne Social Club,” “Gremlins” and “Police Academy 2.” Married from 1960 to 1976 to actor Ken Berry, she was co-founder of the Ladies Club (also called the Hollywood Dumpettes), a support and recovery group for divorced wives of stars. She also has been a columnist many years for the “Tolucan Times,” a Toluca Lake, Calif., newspaper.

Dear Ken: Didn’t Disney child star Hayley Mills record a couple of hit songs as a teenager?

Jolly right, she did. She hit No. 8 on the Billboard Hot 100 in 1961 with “Let’s Get Together,” followed by “Johnny Jingo” at No. 21 in 1962. The actress, 64, has a son, Crispian Mills, who is the lead singer for the psychedelic rock band Kula Shaker.

Dear Ken: How old was Gene Autry’s sidekick Smiley Burnette when he died?

Burnette died of leukemia at the age of 55 in 1967. He made more than 60 musical westerns with Autry as Frog Millhouse and riding his horse Ring-Eyed Nellie. But he also rode beside Roy Rogers, Charles Starrett, Sunset Carson and Bob Livingston. Burnette was a prolific songwriter with more than 400 songs to his credit. His last few years he co-starred on the TV series “Petticoat Junction” as railway engineer Charley Pratt.

If you have a trivia question about actors, singers, movies, TV shows or pop culture, e-mail your query to Ken Beck at