



Life of the Party: The Remarkable Story of How Brownie Wise Built, and Lost, a Tupperware Party Empire

Bob Kealing

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The incredible story of Brownie Wise, the Southern single mother—and postwar #Girlboss—who built, and lost, a Tupperware home-party empire

Before Mary Kay, Martha Stewart, and Joy Mangano, there was Brownie Wise, the charismatic Tupperware executive who converted postwar optimism into a record-breaking sales engine powered by American housewives. In *Life of the Party*, Bob Kealing offers the definitive portrait of Wise, a plucky businesswoman who divorced her alcoholic husband, started her own successful business, and eventually caught the eye of Tupperware inventor, Earl Tupper, whose plastic containers were collecting dust on store shelves.

The Tupperware Party that Wise popularized, a master-class in the soft sell, drove Tupperware's sales to soaring heights. It also gave minimally educated and economically invisible postwar women, including some African-American women, an acceptable outlet for making their own money for their families—and for being rewarded for their efforts. With the people skills of Dale Carnegie, the looks of Doris Day, and the magnetism of Eva Peron, Wise was as popular among her many devoted followers as she was among the press, and she became the first woman to appear on the cover of *BusinessWeek* in 1954. Then, at the height of her success, Wise's ascent ended as quickly as it began. Earl Tupper fired her under mysterious circumstances, wrote her out of Tupperware's success story, and left her with a pittance. He walked away with a fortune and she disappeared—until now.

Originally published as *Tupperware Unsealed* by the University Press of Florida in 2008—and optioned by Sony Pictures, with Sandra Bullock attached to star—this revised and updated edition is perfectly timed to take advantage of renewed interest in this long-overlooked American business icon.

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