

Interviews

FEBRUARY \$2.50

U.K. £2.10



Divine!





BY APPOINTMENT TO
H.R.H. DUKE OF EDINBURGH,
MANUFACTURERS OF WATERPROOF
AND PROTECTIVE CLOTHING
J. BARBOUR & SONS LTD.,
SOUTH SHIELDS.

We now carry...

Barbour

RAINCOATS
& Wellington Boots

The best British clothing for
the worst British weather.

Lederer

613 MADISON AVE. & 58th St. N.Y.C. • EL 5 5515

Free Facts That Can Cut Your Exercise Time in Half

A Challenging Workout
in Only 12 Minutes

You can get an extensive workout for a longer, healthier life just by doing a special 12 minute routine a few days a week. Find out about it by phoning or sending for our FREE booklet, **GUIDE TO BETTER HEALTH AND FITNESS—A 12 Minute Aerobic Workout** by Lifecycle.

You'll Look and Feel Better

This FREE, 16-page illustrated booklet tells you how to improve your cardiorespiratory system, burn calories faster, decrease body fat, alleviate stress and develop a lean, trim body in the privacy of your own home. And it's so easy, your whole family can do it!



Send for the Free Facts Today

All you have to do to get your Free Booklet is return this coupon below to Lifecycle, Bally Fitness, 9601 Jeronimo Road, Irvine, CA 92718 or call Toll Free

1-800-LIF-CYCL Dept. 7F332

Lifecycle
A BALLY FITNESS PRODUCT

YES, I want to cut my exercise time in half! Please send me my FREE copy of the **GUIDE TO BETTER HEALTH AND FITNESS—A 12 Minute Aerobic Workout** by Lifecycle. I understand I am under no obligation.

Send For Your FREE Booklet Today!

MAIL TO: Lifecycle
Bally Fitness
9601 Jeronimo Road
Irvine, CA 92718

(Please Print) Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

7F332

Room in New York.

MVD: She looked the worst I'd ever seen her. She'd lost a lot of weight; she was depressed and having problems with Fox. I knew she was having a relationship with the Kennedys and I think a lot of others did too. But we didn't talk about it then. When I saw that picture of her under a white sheet on a gurney, it made me sick. You go back; you recall everything, all the little signs, and you ask yourself, Why didn't I realize this or see that or listen... What could I have done? But I didn't know Marilyn well enough to say, "Hey, Marilyn, let me help you out." We were all in the same situation and we were all fighting the same thing.

KM: The typecasting, the "dumb blonde" image, or the constraints of the '50s?

MVD: Well, Marilyn opened a lot of doors. At the time, female leads tended to be the girl-next-door or plain-Jane types.



MAMIE VAN DOREN. PHOTOGRAPH BY EUGENE PINKOWSKI. HAIR AND MAKEUP—TRACY LERMAN/CELESTINE-CLOUTIER, L.A.... STYLING—DANNY FLYNN/CELESTINE-CLOUTIER, L.A.... DRESS—UNGARO FOR AMEN WARDY, NEWPORT BEACH.

All of a sudden, when Marilyn hit, it was a revival of the Harlow days. She'd done that nude calendar because she was hungry, and they said it was going to ruin her, but she said all the right things and people loved her for it. She was 20th Century-Fox's darling—she took over where Betty Grable left off. Other studios were looking for someone like her, so every time I went to do a screen test I heard, "You look like Marilyn Monroe."

KM: When did you first meet her?

MVD: At the Ambassador Hotel, when she was doing some modeling for an agency. I had a boyfriend whose father lived there, which was why I was over for the weekend. I was only twelve or thirteen and she was in full blossom—she was Norma Jean then. I stood there and watched her model; she stood out like a diamond. Even though I was just a kid, I thought I would like to be like her when I grew up. And then I kept running into her. When I was only fifteen I had a screen test and she was in the shadows, watching. I saw her blonde hair.

KM: Didn't that make you nervous?

MVD: No. When you're fifteen you don't pay much attention, and she hadn't really made it yet. When people ask me, "How can you compare yourself to this legend?" I say, we were all a bunch of glamor girls trying to make it, and who the hell ever knew Marilyn Monroe was going to be the legend she is today? Everyone now thinks Marilyn was super-special, but in many ways she was like everyone else. It's hard to explain if you weren't there.

KM: Did you have the same kind of relationship with Jayne Mansfield that you did with Marilyn?

MVD: No, I worked with Jayne but I wasn't particularly fond of her. She was a caricature of herself. I felt for her because she did drink quite a bit, and when I'd see her at a party she looked as if she was always having fun, but underneath it all she wasn't. At the end she was quite sad. She let herself go and she was having serious problems with the age thing; her popularity was declining. And then I was

supposed to work in Biloxi, Mississippi, but I was held over in New York doing *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, and she said she would cover for me. So she did and she was killed. It was devastating to me. I took her death harder than Marilyn's. I couldn't believe this could happen a second time. It still gives me goose bumps. I broke out in hives for a week following it.

KM: Was her death one of the reasons you went to Vietnam with your nightclub act?

MVD: I never blamed myself for her death, but I felt that all the blondes were cursed... Then, with the feminism of the late '60s—which I was glad about—people were out burning their bullet bras.

KM: And now, of course, '50s-style clothes are coming back into style. Bullet bras were repression, weren't they—a man's version of the perfect female form.

MVD: Exactly. I never even wore a bra until they made me. I'm the one who started the name bullet bra. I used to call them bullet tits, and they said, "Mamie, well, don't you think..." [laughs]

But getting back to the 'Nam thing... In '68 when I went over, I didn't care what happened to me. I landed in April, in the monsoon season, in the middle of the Tet offensive. And then I decided to go back in 1971. I was depressed—it was a terrible time. I'd just gotten divorced and then my ex-husband was killed in an accident. I toured Vietnam for about three months and took every risk there was. I sponsored myself—I brought my own conductor, secretary and hairdresser—and I always lost money on those trips.

KM: Do you look back now and wonder how you survived?

MVD: Oh yes. I had some very close calls. Hell, we were flying one day and one of the generators went out on the plane—right over Cong territory. It's one thing to crash, but quite another to crash and know that, if you're alive, you'll be picked up by the Cong. Who knows what they'd do to you. And we helicoptered most of the time, and helicopters were always being shot down. But we made it all over, to every fire station where no entertainer had been before. No



BY APPOINTMENT TO
H.R.H. DUKE OF EDINBURGH,
MANUFACTURERS OF WATERPROOF
AND PROTECTIVE CLOTHING
J. BARBOUR & SONS LTD.,
SOUTH SHIELDS.

We now carry...

Barbour

RAINCOATS
& Wellington Boots

The best British clothing for
the worst British weather.

Soderer

613 MADISON AVE. & 58th St. N.Y.C. • EL 5-5515

Free Facts That Can Cut Your Exercise Time in Half

A Challenging Workout
in Only 12 Minutes

You can get an extensive workout for a longer, healthier life just by doing a special 12 minute routine a few days a week. Find out about it by phoning or sending for our FREE booklet, **GUIDE TO BETTER HEALTH AND FITNESS—A 12 Minute Aerobic Workout** by Lifecycle.*

You'll Look and Feel Better

This FREE, 16-page illustrated booklet tells you how to improve your cardiorespiratory system, burn calories faster, decrease body fat, alleviate stress and develop a lean, trim body in the privacy of your own home. And it's so easy, your whole family can do it!



Send for the Free Facts Today

All you have to do to get your Free Booklet is return this coupon below to
Lifecycle, Bally Fitness, 9601 Jeronimo Road, Irvine, CA 92718

or call Toll Free
1-800-LIF-CYCL Dept. 7F332

Lifecycle
A HEALTH COMPANY

YES, I want to cut my exercise time in half! Please send me my FREE copy of the **GUIDE TO BETTER HEALTH AND FITNESS—A 12 Minute Aerobic Workout** by Lifecycle.* I understand I am under no obligation.

Send For Your FREE Booklet Today!

MAIL TO: Lifecycle
Bally Fitness
9601 Jeronimo Road
Irvine, CA 92718

(Please Print) Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

7F332

Room in New York.

MVD: She looked the worst I'd ever seen her. She'd lost a lot of weight; she was depressed and having problems with Fox. I knew she was having a relationship with the Kennedys and I think a lot of others did too. But we didn't talk about it then. When I saw that picture of her under a white sheet on a gurney, it made me sick. You go back; you recall everything, all the little signs, and you ask yourself, Why didn't I realize this or see that or listen... What could I have done? But I didn't know Marilyn well enough to say, "Hey, Marilyn, let me help you out." We were all in the same situation and we were all fighting the same thing.

KM: The typecasting, the "dumb blonde" image, or the constraints of the '50s?

MVD: Well, Marilyn opened a lot of doors. At the time, female leads tended to be the girl-next-door or plain-Jane types.



MAMIE VAN DOREN. PHOTOGRAPH BY EUGENE PINKOWSKI. HAIR AND MAKEUP—TRACY LERMAN/CELESTINE-CLOUTIER, L.A.... STYLING—DANNY FLYNN/CELESTINE-CLOUTIER, L.A.... DRESS—UNGARO FOR AMEN WARDY, NEWPORT BEACH.

All of a sudden, when Marilyn hit, it was a revival of the Harlow days. She'd done that nude calendar because she was hungry, and they said it was going to ruin her, but she said all the right things and people loved her for it. She was 20th Century-Fox's darling—she took over where Betty Grable left off. Other studios were looking for someone like her, so every time I went to do a screen test I heard, "You look like Marilyn Monroe."

KM: When did you first meet her?

MVD: At the Ambassador Hotel, when she was doing some modeling for an agency. I had a boyfriend whose father lived there, which was why I was over for the weekend. I was only twelve or thirteen and she was in full blossom—she was Norma Jean then. I stood there and watched her model; she stood out like a diamond. Even though I was just a kid, I thought I would like to be like her when I grew up. And then I kept running into her. When I was only fifteen I had a screen test and she was in the shadows, watching. I saw her blonde hair.

KM: Didn't that make you nervous?

MVD: No. When you're fifteen you don't pay much attention, and she hadn't really made it yet. When people ask me, "How can you compare yourself to this legend?" I say, we were all a bunch of glamor girls trying to make it, and who the hell ever knew Marilyn Monroe was going to be the legend she is today? Everyone now thinks Marilyn was super-special, but in many ways she was like everyone else. It's hard to explain if you weren't there.

KM: Did you have the same kind of relationship with Jayne Mansfield that you did with Marilyn?

MVD: No, I worked with Jayne but I wasn't particularly fond of her. She was a caricature of herself. I felt for her because she did drink quite a bit, and when I'd see her at a party she looked as if she was always having fun, but underneath it all she wasn't. At the end she was quite sad. She let herself go and she was having serious problems with the age thing; her popularity was declining. And then I was

supposed to work in Biloxi, Mississippi, but I was held over in New York doing *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, and she said she would cover for me. So she did and she was killed. It was devastating to me. I took her death harder than Marilyn's. I couldn't believe this could happen a second time. It still gives me goose bumps. I broke out in hives for a week following it.

KM: Was her death one of the reasons you went to Vietnam with your nightclub act?

MVD: I never blamed myself for her death, but I felt that all the blondes were cursed.... Then, with the feminism of the late '60s—which I was glad about—people were out burning their bullet bras.

KM: And now, of course, '50s-style clothes are coming back into style. Bullet bras were repression, weren't they—a man's version of the perfect female form.

MVD: Exactly. I never even wore a bra until they made me. I'm the one who started the name bullet bra. I used to call them bullet tits, and they said, "Mamie, well, don't you think..." [laughs]

But getting back to the 'Nam thing...

In '68 when I went over, I didn't care what happened to me. I landed in April, in the monsoon season, in the middle of the Tet offensive. And then I decided to go back in 1971. I was depressed—it was a terrible time. I'd just gotten divorced and then my ex-husband was killed in an accident. I toured Vietnam for about three months and took every risk there was. I sponsored myself—I brought my own conductor, secretary and hairdresser—and I always lost money on those trips.

KM: Do you look back now and wonder how you survived?

MVD: Oh yes. I had some very close calls. Hell, we were flying one day and one of the generators went out on the plane—right over Cong territory. It's one thing to crash, but quite another to crash and know that, if you're alive, you'll be picked up by the Cong. Who knows what they'd do to you. And we helicoptered most of the time, and helicopters were always being shot down. But we made it all over, to every fire station where no entertainer had been before. No



one else risked such danger, and I stayed in huts down with the grunts. They were in shock that I was there—they called me their angel. I still get letters and invitations from vets—they recognize me as a friend... unlike Jane Fonda.

KM: It is a bit ironic that soon after your return to the States, you were pursued by Spiro Agnew, and then Henry Kissinger, whom you justifiably spurned because he had "denture breath" and "dirty socks." What do you think Kissinger's going to do when he reads your book?

MVD: Probably keep his socks clean! He had a charming accent and a lot of sex appeal. He tried to date me several times before, but I wasn't interested until I saw him at dinner at the White House. I wanted to kiss Henry right then; he was a charmer. If I'd brought some Polident maybe I would have!

KM: Another man who unsuccessfully tried to seduce you was Johnny Carson, and then he snubbed you after your numerous appearances on his show. Do you think you'll get invited on now?

MVD: No! Maybe he got tired of being teased. I don't blame him. How long can you keep going, you know? And then he surrounded himself with his cronies, his yes-men.

KM: Howard Hughes surrounded himself with a lot of yes-men, too.

MVD: But they were very different, personality-wise. Howard was so weird and eccentric, but I liked him. I wish I'd been older and able to have more of a rapport with him, but I was just too young at fifteen to know. And he wasn't very subtle about what he wanted.

KM: Are you still friends with any of your exes?

MVD: I've never been friends with any of them. When I walk away I never look back. When a man treats me poorly I lose my desire and sex appeal. I can't believe how some women really like to be abused. I was watching Joan Collins' divorce trial, and it was like a soap opera. Joan went through pretty much the same scenario that I did; she didn't make it really big because of the comparisons with Elizabeth Taylor. So she's had *Dynasty*, but that's on its way out, and now what happens? She better save her money—she knows what it's like to stand on line and get her unemployment check. I can't speak for her, but I can speak for me: You don't marry men like Peter Holm; you have affairs with them. Peter Holm put all those suits on, but clothes don't make the man. Thomas [Dixon] and I are going on our fourteenth year together. He's my best friend and I really trust him. We have a lot in common and we battle the world together. But the first four years were terrible. He was really hard to get along with and I was a bitch! But we stuck it out and now we look back and laugh. I never wanted to waste my time with somebody I knew wasn't going to work out at all. I walk. I've walked away from some pretty good love affairs.

KM: Like Steve McQueen.

MVD: He was nice, real natural and he never changed. He wasn't a "movie star." He would go down and work on his cars and you'd never know who he was. But he liked the things he could buy with the money he was making. It was just bad timing....

KM: Was it bad timing with Clark Gable, too?

MVD: We did *Teacher's Pet* together. My marriage [to big-band leader Ray Anthony] was so bad at that time, I had to look for something, but he was married to Kay [Spreckels]. Now that I'm older I can understand why he didn't pursue it. He



MAMIE WITH HUSBAND
BANDELEADER RAY ANTHONY, 1957.

wanted to, but he was kind of shy and embarrassed about it. He was so shy.

KM: James Dean was shy too....

MVD: He was another eccentric. I met him at a hangout for actors where we'd go drinking. He had a motorcycle and asked me if I wanted a ride. I protested because I had a dress on and he said, "What's that got to do with it?" So off we went.

KM: Did he have any special mystique?

MVD: He was dirty! He smelled like he had this cheap grease on his hair, like he didn't wash it. I can still smell that leftover grease! When I kissed him he tasted of nicotine. Ray knew we had gone out and always accused me having an affair with him, but I didn't. When I heard that Jimmy was dead I said I wished I had. He was so young.

KM: What about Warren Beatty?

MVD: He tried. He always told me what I was missing by not sleeping with him. He was horny! Nothing stopped him.

KM: And Burt Reynolds?

MVD: I think he abused his sex appeal. Clint Eastwood treasured it and used it, but Burt sometimes made fun of it. If you put everybody on all the time, women get tired. That's what happened to Burt's career—he did it to himself.

KM: Does Burt's put-on act stem from insecurity?

MVD: I think it's just Burt Reynolds. He once called himself "the male Mamie Van Doren," and I thought, Well, what does that mean? Was it because he was the centerfold in *Cosmo* and I'd been in *Playboy*? I suppose there was nothing wrong with him saying that, but I still wanted to find out what was under that hat!

KM: Did you mind posing in the nude?

MVD: Not at all. I'm glad I did it. People said, "How could you? You have a son growing up." But he was proud of me and the way I looked. I've never given him any reason to hide anything. He's able to choose what he wants.

KM: In retrospect, it's funny how you were put in the mold of a "bad woman" for doing what comes naturally to women now, AIDS notwithstanding.

Pet Shop Boys, actually.



New.
Includes the worldwide hit,
"It's A Sin,"
"What Have I Done To Deserve This?"
and more.

EMI
MAN
HAY
TAN

Available on high-quality XDR® cassettes, compact discs and records.
© 1987 EMI-Manhattan Records, a division of Capitol Records, Inc.

MVD: If I were doing all the things now that I did back then . . . well, I couldn't. In those days there was no legal abortion and I always carried my own rubbers.

And I can't believe what's going on now, this controversy over abortions. It's enough to make a good conservative a screaming liberal. A woman is not going to have a child she doesn't want, and the poor are the ones who are really going to suffer, because the rich can always get an abortion. I'd like to see a man carry something inside of him for nine months that he didn't want, and then take care of it. A woman should have help if she wants it. I don't believe in abortion and I never have [although she had one, thanks to a famous sports figure whose name had to be deleted from the book—ed.], but by God, if you want one you should be able to have one.

No man, no government, should have power over anyone's body. It's all a question of power.

KM: Speaking of power, you certainly zing it to gossip columnist Louella Parsons in your book. She had a personal grudge against you because your first manager, Jimmy McHugh, was once her boyfriend. But your relationship with McHugh was strictly professional.

MVD: She really screwed my life up. It's hard enough to make it, let alone have somebody constantly hammering at you and stopping you from getting into movies. She was a bitch.

KM: It's hard to believe that columnists like Louella or Hedda Hopper had the power to make or break careers.

MVD: Indeed they did. Hedda liked me up to a point, although in later years she

turned on me. She liked me because she knew Louella didn't. She would put my picture on the front page of the Sunday paper, knowing how much it would gall Louella, who was trying to build Marilyn. But Hedda hated Jayne Mansfield. She said Jayne would shit out the May Company window to get publicity. I never forgot that.

KM: Are you worried that someone might take your book the wrong way?

MVD: I don't think I hurt anyone in this book. I didn't put anyone down. I wrote it with a sense of humor and brought people down to earth. These people are celebrities and they should expect these things. And there are many other people I didn't even put in.

KM: Like who, for instance?

MVD [laughs]: Well, I'm going to have to

write a book called *Extra Innings*. There were a lot. I couldn't believe how many associations or affairs I had. I've really enjoyed my life and I've lived it to the fullest. I wouldn't change it for anything. Look at me—I'm healthy. The proof is in the way I look and feel. I like my life now . . . I think women look better as they grow older. But there are too many face lifts being done. So many women do it because they think men expect it of them. Even if I were shaped just like a boy, I don't think I'd ever get silicone or whatever. And here I am trying to burn my boobs down by pumping weights! If I wanted to look a little bit bigger I'd just put falsies on, which I have. I wish appearances weren't that important. Charm comes by being natural. True glamor and real sexiness come from inside. □