

'She fights for privacy, but she is . . . a natural exhibitionist'



Jackie and Caroline at Sun Valley

JACKIE COMES OFF HER PEDESTAL

Last of a Series

By LIZ SMITH

Some say that Jackie got her "whim of iron" in irritation over the enormous sums of money that are going to be made by Manchester, his publishers and Look. Is she so angry that she won't accept Look's original generous donation for the Kennedy Memorial Library or the royalties from the book which are supposed to come to the library after Manchester takes his profit from the first edition?

Whatever the questions, before she had to act against the book, Jackie was trying hard to simply pursue happiness. She had to contend with the usual remarks from New Yorkers who said, "She ruins any party she attends. It isn't her fault, it's just *who* she is."

There was some grain of truth in this. It seems also to apply to men who might be potential men-in-her-life. Either they are obvious climbers onto her bandwagon or so awed by the legend of who and what she is that nothing much can ever result.

Her real friends, who obviously don't let

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Jackie Off Her Pedestal

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anything stand in the way of treating her as a human being, are people like the Mellons, who celebrated Jackie's birthday on July 28 with a party that was the event of the summer on Cape Cod. They flew in all of Jackie's favorite people for a simple, uncluttered, fun evening of sheer pleasure. Protocol was completely ignored and no one was invited for any reason other than Jackie's desire to see them there.

The guest list was impressive—the Robert McNamaras, for instance, but because she really likes them, not because he is Secretary of Defense—the David Bruces, who flew over from England—decorator Billy Baldwin—Oliver Smith—Mike Nichols—the Leonard Bernsteins—musician Sam Barber—the Fred Cushings—the Jock Whitneys, who came in their own yacht—the Bill Paleys of CBS—the Averell Harrimans—the Frank Schiffs. (Mrs. Schiff, who is one of Jackie's tennis-playing pals, is a fashion editor.) Even Jackie's confidant and friend, hairdresser Kenneth, attended as a guest.

In September, Jacqueline lent her name to the "Fashions in Dance" at the St. James Theatre and, as an honorary chairman, helped raise a bundle for the American Ballet Theater (of which she is a trustee). Naturally, the event was the kick-off of the big fall social season in New York.

More Personal Decisions

Reluctant to choose one charity over another, Jackie had avoided this sort of stand in the past, but now she seems to be making more and more personal decisions of this sort.

Still and all, she did not attend the actual event when it happened, and avoided other gala New York happenings as if a bit wary of being embroiled in too much socializing. For instance, she didn't go to the opening night of the new Metropolitan Opera at Lincoln Center.

She was very much on hand for the opening of the new Whitney Museum of Art on Madison Ave. It was at this premiere that Jackie got mashed in a crush at the elevator door—at first, she seemed frightened, then she laughed her way out of it. It was the sort of daytime, more casual occasion, mixed with arty good intentions, which she seems to relish.

After having a special mask made, she did not attend Truman Capote's party of the year at the Plaza. Perhaps it all seemed ultra-frivolous. On the other hand, she was certainly being publicly frivolous and not too public relations-conscious when she appeared at Lafayette in the mini-skirt. She knows full well that photographers show up everywhere she goes. Lately, she seems to be a bit more deliberately daring than ever, as if challenging the world to accept her on her own terms. There were some nasty cracks about her "short skirt" and matching "short temper" when she appeared with attorney Simon Rifkind to confab with Look wearing, again, the minifest of mini skirts.

Attitudes Ambiguous

In many respects, her attitudes are ambiguous. "She is a girl who wants everything," says one person who knows her." She fights for privacy, but she is something of a natural exhibitionist. She repeats the same things she told Manchester, but wants everyone to forget she said any of it. Well, she showed them all, anyway. They thought she was fragile. But she refused to be exploited, even though in the end, the publicity was worse for her than if she had simply let Manchester and Look go ahead and print whatever they liked.

She could then have called a press conference, gotten the entire world's attention, disavowed the book, said she regretted and repudiated it, deplored its vulgarity and tastelessness, assured President Johnson that neither she nor Bobby were responsible for the anti-LBJ tone of the thing, and come out smelling like a rose. But she preferred a more honest fight, I suppose, and to take her

chances on whether or not next year she'll still be the world's most admired woman.

Admired or not, she is still fashion's darling. Women's Wear Daily dubbed her one of the "REALGIRLS—honest, natural, open, de-contrived, de-kooked, delicious, subtle, feminine, young, modern, in love with life, knows how to have fun."

There is no question she is living her own life these days, marching to her own distant drummer, willfully and freely, looking for fun and games, longing for romance, seeking her own age group more and more, rejecting the typecast role of either saint or sinner.

Other than that, Jacqueline Kennedy must become more real to both her aficionados and her detractors as she becomes more real and realistic to herself. Surely people can learn to appreciate her in the fullness of her limitations as a human being, in her all-too-human liabilities, with whatever faults exist, when one possesses vigor, vitality and individuality, just as they did in the enigmatic days of her grand mystique when she seemed to be 100 per cent perfect.

After all, as Daniel tells us in the Good Book, the idol with feet of clay still has a head of gold.