

HOTLINE FROM HOLLYWOOD...



This month I suggested to Shirley that she should ring me at home one evening – and it wasn't just so I could talk to her curled up in my favourite armchair! You see, if she's going to catch me at the office, she has to put through the call around 8.30 in the morning Hollywood time. Well, that's O.K. during filming sessions, because all the Partridge Family are hard at work when most other people are still putting off hauling themselves out from under the bedclothes.

But I thought Shirley deserved a lie-in on any day when she had the chance to get up at a more civilised hour. And I must say it was nice to be able to put some records on (no prizes for guessing whose!) while I waited for her call to come through.

Oedipus (that's my cat – "Puss" for short!) thought I'd gone crazy when the phone rang. He's not used to seeing me move so fast and he almost budged from in front of the fire with the shock! It certainly was great to hear Shirley's voice again:

SHIRLEY: Hello, Shirley here . . . Is that you, Pat?

Me: Yes, and it's marvellous to have a chance for a chat again, Shirley. How are you enjoying your life of leisure?

SHIRLEY: MY WHAT? You must be joking! I may not have ONE of my families to cope with right now, Pat, but I can assure you that my other one keeps me plenty busy enough! Actually it's been real nice to be at home for a spell and to be around whenever Shawn, Pat and Ryan come in. Usually, of course, I don't get back home till about half seven in the evenings – sometimes even later. And that kind of schedule doesn't give me much chance to try out special recipes! It's been lovely having the time to cook up some real tasty meals for Jack and the boys (nothing's gone disastrously wrong yet either, which is quite a surprise!)



SHIRLEY TALKING

ME: I bet they look forward to the lay-off in filming! But don't you think you deserve something of a real holiday yourself, Shirley?

SHIRLEY: I'm not too sure if I deserve one, but, whether or not, I'm just about to take one. In fact, I'll be starting packing this coming Thursday.

ME: Where are you off to?

SHIRLEY: Only New York. Mind, I shouldn't really say 'only' because I love it out East and my trips to New York are about the only chance I get for clothes shopping these days. Even if I did have any time going spare here in Los Angeles, the clothes you can buy here don't have anything on those in New York.

 Shirley, pictured here in one of her favourite Partridge show costumes.