

ME: It sounds terrific for the fans all right – but what about David? Wasn't he exhausted by the end of that week? He must have had to fit in an awful lot of travelling – let alone all those sessions singing on stage!

SHIRLEY: Oh, sure, he was tired when he got back, but I think he loved every minute of the tour. I know he specially enjoyed the shows he did in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Boston . . . Seems like his audiences gave him a wonderful reception. I guess he's never had "Happy Birthday To You" sung to him so many times in all his life put together as he has in this year alone! He was thrilled by it all, and I reckon his excitement would have kept him going through that week, no matter how tired he'd got. He seemed to be really buoyed up on cloud nine!

(At this point, I remembered that half the idea of phoning Shirley in the first place had been to hear the latest on Susan, so I got round to it at this point).

ME: Hey, by the way, Shirley, can you put me out of my misery about Susan? What's all this about her holiday? . . . I never heard anything about her plans and then suddenly this morning there I was with a postcard from her!

SHIRLEY: Oh, yes, that was the big plot of all time! Susan kept it quiet – even from us – till right up to the last minute. I think she was nervy that, if she made too much of it, something would crop up and stop her going . . . Ideas about Fate stepping in, you know? Well, she smuggled herself out of the States – oh, let me see . . . must have been the end of March.



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She organised most everything herself, with the friend who's gone along with her. All I knew was that they were going to take Spain as their start-off point and that they'd got plans to hire a car once they hit Europe. Last thing I heard from her was that she'd be back around the end of April, but I figure they'll take it on into May if they're really enjoying themselves because we're not scheduled to start filming here again till the 15th.

ME: Well, it all ties up, Shirley – thanks! Sue's postcard to me is from Spain and it sounds as though she's having a great time! But what about you? Have you taken a proper holiday yet during the break?

SHIRLEY: Well, I guess it's not been the sort of holiday you'd call a 'proper' one, Pat . . . But it's been the nicest kind of vacation I could have had as far as I'm concerned. You see, I've really had the chance to relax at home – just sit down and put my feet up or go to a few shows, catch up with seeing my friends and going shopping . . . you know, all that kind of thing that I never get the chance to fit in normally! I really feel relaxed now – ready to tackle anything. In fact, I've just done a Bob Hope Special and I enjoyed it so much – I'm sure the fact that I felt so well and relaxed in myself had a lot to do with it! Still, I'm always happy working with Bob – he's a great guy and just as much fun off the screen as he is on!

ME: Have you got anything special coming up soon, Shirley, or is the new session's filming the next big event in your diary?

SHIRLEY: Gee, not by a long shot! In fact, be thinking of me, won't you, Pat, on the 29th!

ME: Yes, of course . . . That's next Saturday, isn't it?

SHIRLEY: NEXT SATURDAY! Boy, that makes it seem awful close. Well, I'll tell you . . . You see, Pat – wait for it! – I'm going to be at the White House that day.

ME: Really! That's absolutely fantastic, Shirley! How've you managed to keep it to yourself all the time we've been talking?

I'd have been bursting to tell everybody if it was me!

SHIRLEY: I must say, I'm pretty excited about it myself. It's some honour all right. I've been invited to be the top entertainer at this special party that all the newsmen are putting on for the President and his wife. I feel really proud that they chose to ask me. But I must be getting along now, Pat, because I leave for Washington tomorrow and I need some time to get things organised this end . . . Packing – uh! I do NOT like packing. So I'm going to have to call off now, and get moving, because, if there's one thing I hate more than packing, it's a last minute panic!

ME: Well, it's been just great talking to you, Shirley, and hearing your marvellous news! Let me know how it goes when you get back, won't you? I'll be waiting to hear from you.

SHIRLEY: I sure will, Pat. Bye for now. I'll be in touch again soon. Oh – don't forget to give my love to Susie and all your readers . . . Bye!