

# HOT-LINE FROM HOLLYWOOD!

## SHIRLEY JONES TALKING

*Cast your mind back to last year . . .*

*There I was, way back at the end of good old 1972, trying to recover from eating far too much Christmas pud, when Shirley 'phoned me.*

**SHIRLEY:** Hi there, Pat. I hope I've picked a good moment to wish you a Happy Christmas . . .

**ME:** Shirley! How lovely! Happy Christmas to you and the boys from all of us over here. Are you spending Christmas at home this year, then?

**SHIRLEY:** We'd all set our hearts on an old-fashioned white Christmas, so we came back to New York. That's the one thing I really miss about L.A.—the crispness of the winter days back East. And I just adore snow, so we decided to fly home for a proper white Christmas.

**ME:** So the boys went with you?

**SHIRLEY:** You bet!—they'd travel miles for a chance of a snow fight. And besides I'd hate us to be apart at Christmas of all times in the year. We're staying with some friends who have a farm in upstate New York, so we've had a marvellous time.

**ME:** Any idea how long you'll be staying?

**SHIRLEY:** Oh, about a month in New York, I guess. I have been mulling over a plan to follow on with a vacation in Europe, but it looks as if that may have to fall through now.

**ME:** I gather you've been keeping pretty busy since the Partridge Family struck for vacation . . .

**SHIRLEY:** That's right. I've been working on this movie for the past three weeks or so. We only wound it up the day before yesterday and, you know, I was really sorry to quit it. It was a fascinating part and made a real change from playing Mrs. Partridge!

**ME:** Hey! Can you fill me in a bit more? All I'd heard was that you had something lined up that meant you'd have no time to spare for personal appearances, but I never got as far as discovering precisely what that "something" was!

**SHIRLEY:** Oh, gee! And there was I, kind of assuming that you knew all about it! Well, I went straight from the Partridge Family farewells to working on this movie called "The Girls of Huntingdon House". I doubt if you'll ever get to see it over in Britain because it's been produced for TV, not the big screen.

**ME:** What was your part like, Shirley?

**SHIRLEY:** Oh, it was really good . . . I felt that here I'd gotten something I could put my teeth into. You see, the whole thing is set in a home for unwed mothers—Huntingdon House. And I was playing this woman who teaches English there. So I needed to build some quite complex relationships with several of the girls in the home. It was fresh and

challenging and I really had to think and work at the part. I just hope it comes across on the screen!

**ME:** Oh, I'm absolutely sure it will, Shirley! But you will be returning to the Partridge Family, won't you?

**SHIRLEY:** Oh, sure! As long as they film the series, I'll be staying with it. Everybody seemed very pleased with the last series, so there doesn't seem to be any doubt about it, but I'm waiting for confirmation before I say anything definite. I should hear for sure some time in February.

**ME:** Well, that's nice to know. You sounded as though you'd maybe had enough, and, what with all the rumours we've been hearing over here about David pulling out a year ahead of schedule, you really had me worried for a minute!

**SHIRLEY:** Oh, no, Pat . . . I didn't mean to give that impression at all. It's just that, by the end of a seven-month season, you're ready for a break from the routine. And that goes for David too, I guess—well, it goes for just about all of us. . . . Even the techs like to switch over to a different scene for a while.

But what's this about David pulling out?

**ME:** Just rumours, as far as I know, Shirley. Well, I know for sure that, when David was over here in September, he was all set to see his contract through. But you can't help wondering when you keep coming across reports of these "rumours".

**SHIRLEY:** I sometimes think folks start rumours off just to give them something to put in print! Anyway, you can tell all your readers that David has no plans at all of quitting the Partridge Family next season if the series goes on renewal. . . . At least, not to my knowledge he hasn't!! And, knowing David, he would certainly have the decency to mention it to the other members of the cast if he did have a plot like that up his sleeve!

**ME:** That's really nice to know, Shirley—especially now that the show has, at long last, returned to the British screen. It would be awful if David chose that moment to leave.

**SHIRLEY:** Well, I suggest you make good and sure by asking him yourself when he's over in the Spring. Which reminds me that I had very strict instructions to wish you and all his British fans a very happy New Year. And, of course, that goes for all of us here—including Ryan!

*With that I let Shirley get back to her family. . . . I'm afraid all those Partridge good wishes are reaching you a little late, but I know you'll understand that we simply can't get into print instantly. . . . Anyway, the Christmas post is notoriously slow, so perhaps you won't even notice the difference!*