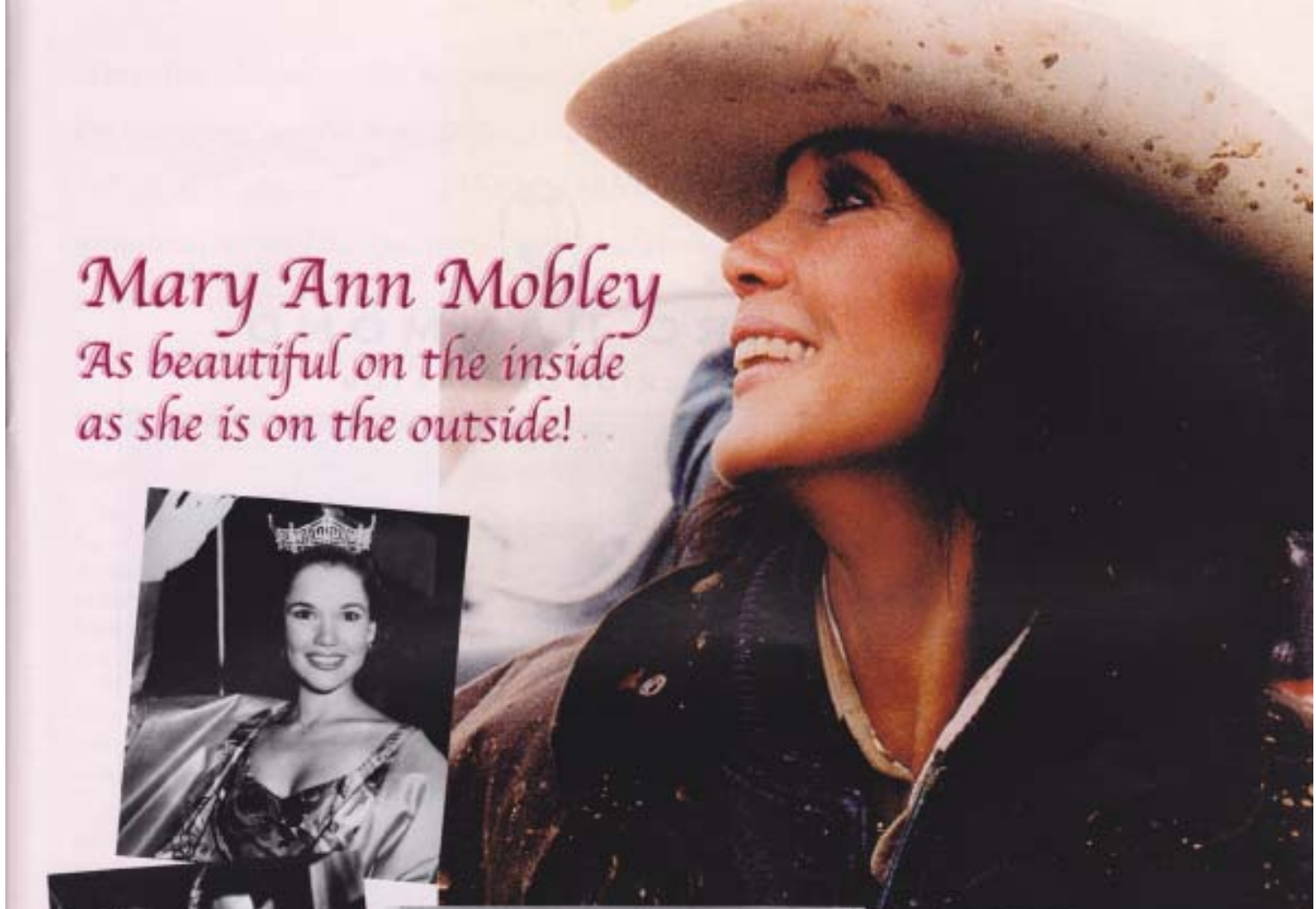




## This Saratoga-loving former Miss America a true steel magnolia



If the eyes are the mirror of the soul, gazing into those through which Mary Ann Mobley views the world provides a glimpse into the breathtaking beauty of an earthbound angel. Blessed with physical attributes and talent that made her a natural for the title of Miss America in 1959 and romantic roles opposite Elvis in the early 1960s, Mobley soon proved herself to be more than just another pretty face. Her dedicated work as a humanitarian is legendary, and she has earned a reputation as a tireless champion for a number of health-related organizations. Her most courageous endeavors have taken her to Third World countries to film documentaries about the plight of millions of children who are helpless victims of war and deprivation.



*Mary Ann Mobley*  
*As beautiful on the inside*  
*as she is on the outside!*



*By Ann Hauprich*

*If the eyes are the mirror of the soul, gazing into those through which Mary Ann Mobley views the world provides a glimpse into the breathtaking beauty of an earthbound angel.*

*Blessed with physical attributes and talent that made her a natural for the title of Miss America in 1959 and romantic roles opposite Elvis Presley in the early 1960s, Mobley soon proved herself to be more than just another pretty face.*





*Mary Ann Mobley credits her mother and grandmother with encouraging her both to dream and to stand up for her beliefs with conviction . . . albeit in a ladylike fashion. "My grandmother had the gentlest of ways, yet she was a strong person. I remember her saying that if a person had to use four-letter words to make a point, it meant they needed to improve their vocabulary. It was from her that I learned that being nice should never be perceived as being weak."*



Indeed, she has the distinction of being the only pageant winner ever to achieve wide success on the big screen as well as on Broadway and prime time TV upon completion of her reign as Miss America. Her dedicated work as a humanitarian is legendary, and she has earned a reputation as a tireless champion for a number of health-related organizations. The courage she demonstrated in breaking the silence about her own struggles with Crohn's Disease won the southern belle accolades as a true steel magnolia.

Mobley's most heart-wrenching and, occasionally dangerous, assignments have taken her to Cambodia, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Somalia, Kenya, Simbawe and the Sudan, where she filmed award-winning documentaries providing in-depth looks at the plight of millions of children who are helpless victims of war and deprivation.

It was a pioneering endeavor both because she was the lone female in a five-member crew and also because hers was the first American television production team to enter Communist Cambodia. Among the men in the entourage was her husband, award-winning actor/talk show host Gary Collins. It was during the time Collins was on location filming the TV series "Born Free" that the couple had first witnessed the children's suffering first-hand.

With a beautiful home awaiting them upon their return home to their posh Beverly Hills 90210 address, the couple could easily have turned their backs on the misery half way around the world. Instead, they vowed to do something to educate global audiences about what they had observed so that similar tragedies might be prevented from happening in the future.

Happily married for 36 years, Mobley and Collins consider themselves "best friends" and realize they are a rare Hollywood twosome not just because they're looking forward to their 40th anniversary in a few years, but also because they've have had the same address and the same phone number for as many years as they've been wed.

Mobley awards for credit for the domestic stability to her better half. "Gary's a saint," she told *Saratoga Living Magazine*



during a recent long distance interview from California. If not quite ready for canonization, Collins certainly is every bit as warm and personable on the telephone as when he earned an Emmy while hosting the long-running "Hour Magazine" talk show in the 1980s. Recently honored with his own

star on Hollywood's famous Walk of Fame, Collins is also active in the March of Dimes and relief organizations to end world hunger. In addition, he enthusiastically supports Mobley's work on behalf of the National Crohn's and Colitis Foundation.

CONTINUED ON PAGE B2







*"I had just won a Golden Globe and was feeling on top of the world. I thought I had the world on a string . . . (after two weeks in the hospital) the doctors came in and informed me that I had an incurable disease." -- Mary Ann Mobley*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

The couple, who enjoy visiting Saratoga Springs in the summer as guests of Marylou Whitney, met shortly after Mobley was initially diagnosed as having Crohn's in her 20s.

"I had just won a Golden Globe and was feeling on top of the world. I really thought I had the world on a string . . . I had just finished a month on a movie called 'Three On A Couch' with Jerry Lewis and Janet Leigh. It was a wonderful shoot, but a hard shoot, and when I came back to Los Angeles from location, I was not feeling well. I didn't have a doctor in LA, but found a nice physician who put me in the hospital where they ran all sorts of tests. After two weeks and all sorts of torturous things . . . the doctors came in and informed me that I had an incurable disease."

In fairness to the doctors, Mobley says even they didn't know much about Crohn's 40 years ago except that symptoms typically included diarrhea (often watery and/or bloody), severe abdominal and/or intestinal pain and chills. Another word used to describe it was "debilitating."

To say Mobley was initially devastated would be an understatement. Then single and far from her family and friends in her Mississippi hometown, she vividly recalls feeling incredibly isolated and frightened.

Dehydrated and anemic from diarrhea and internal bleeding and limping like Festus from "Gunsmoke", the budding young actress was advised to abandon her show business aspirations because he felt the stress was triggering the attacks. That physician urged her to have surgery.

"But God must have been with me because I felt strongly that there had to be another answer. That answer turned out to be another

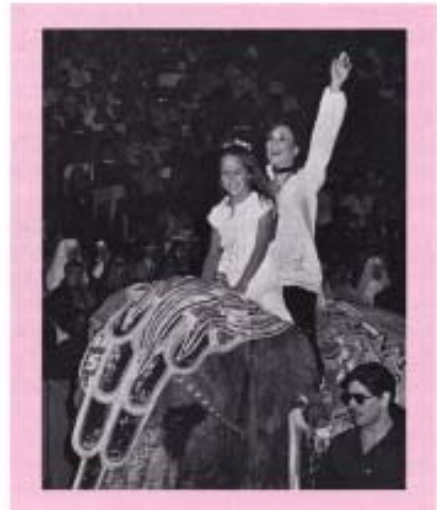
doctor by the name of Martin Pops. He smiled at me, and said not to worry . . . that we would live with this with dignity and there would be no surgery unless there was no other alternative. I left his office feeling that no longer was I going to be a victim . . . I had a hand in my own battle."

"I subscribed to *Prevention Magazine* and read everything I could about nutrition and Crohn's Disease, and though I'm certainly not a doctor, I began my steps to remission through the use of conventional medicine and vitamin therapy."

With her improved health came guest spots on shows like "Fantasy Island" and recurring roles as Dr. Beth Everdeen on the TV drama "Falcon Crest" and as Maggie McKinney Drummond on the popular sitcom "Diff'rent Strokes." Ironically, she never missed a day's filming. In addition to her stage, movie and television work, the multi-talented Mobley also performed death defying trapeze acts in CBS "Circus of the Stars" shows -- not to mention scuba diving with sharks and flying with the Blue Angels in an F-18.

"There still isn't a cure for Crohn's, but there is much those of us with the disease can do to prevent the symptoms from worsening and to greatly improve the quality of our lives."

When the beautiful and glamorous movie star later made the courageous decision to break the silence about her own experiences with Crohn's Disease and ulcerative colitis, she offered an enormous ray of hope to the two million men, women and children who suffer from the disorder .





*Local Crohn's patient thanks  
Mary Ann & Marylou for giving  
her the priceless gift of hope*

As was the case with former Miss America turned actress Mary Ann Mobley, the first symptoms of Crohn's Disease often surface when the victims are young -- typically between the ages of 15 and 25.

A Saratoga County college student recently penned a poignant essay detailing her personal journey of pain, isolation and despair -- and how the caring long-distance intervention of Mary Ann Mobley and Cady Hill's Marylou Whitney fostered renewed hope and healing.

An excerpt from the 21-year-old's story appears below. To read the moving account in its entirety, please visit [www.saratogaliving.com](http://www.saratogaliving.com).

*"We've all heard inspirational stories of compassionate strangers magically coming into the lives of those in pain or need. These strangers are inevitably such incredible powers of example that they succeed in transforming the other person's entire outlook on life. It happens on OPRAH all the time. I just never thought it would happen to me.*

*The first surprise was an absolutely beautiful hand-written letter my mother received from Marylou Whitney insisting that we contact her good friend, Mary Ann Mobley, a prominent spokesperson for the National Crohn's & Colitis Foundation. Mary Ann could, of course, easily have passed my name along to a committee member and gone about her busy, glamorous life.*

*Instead, she insisted that I call her -- not once or twice, but about a dozen times over a period of weeks. Although we had never met, she talked to me as if I were her own daughter, or at the very least, a long lost friend. Always patient, kind and in good humor, Mary Ann listened intently and I sensed that she genuinely understood -- and felt -- my pain."*

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## How Mary Ann & Gary fell in love ... with Saratoga Springs, that is!

*The first time Mary Ann Mobley and Gary Collins set foot in The Spa City as guests of Marylou Whitney and her late husband, C. V. (Sonny) Whitney, two decades ago, they concluded that "God ran out of ugly when He got to Saratoga Springs."*



Marylou Whitney and John Hendrickson en route to one of the many Saratoga galas at which Mary Ann Mobley and Gary Collins were guests.



The couple, who stayed at the Whitney's Cady Hill estate near SPAC for 15 consecutive summers, were impressed not only by the region's natural beauty and diverse attractions but by the welcoming manner in which they were embraced by residents. "People would come up to us on the street and introduce themselves and say they hoped we were enjoying our stay. We were touched by their hospitality," recalls Mobley, who first met the Whitneys when they were at the Kentucky Derby as guests of Governor Martha Layne Collins (no relation to Gary). Mobley and Collins were subsequently invited to attend one of Marlou's famous theme parties as guests of the governor.

"It was friendship at first sight," muses Mobley, recalling how the two ladies often have so much to share with one another that they both start talking at the same time!

Over the next several years, Mobley and Collins made many happy memories with the jet-setting (and adventure-loving) socialite in a variety of settings across North America. They continue to enjoy the company of Marylou and her husband, John Hendrickson (above decked out for "Phanton of the Opera" gala) when their four busy schedules permit.

In addition to the fun times they share, Marylou has the greatest admiration and respect for the Beverly Hills couple because of the health and humanitarian causes they so actively support.

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Saratoga Cardiology Associates is a full service private cardiology practice, including all aspects of cardiovascular care.



Her affiliation with the National Crohn's and Colitis Foundation has drawn much needed attention to the cause and the need for more research and better treatment options.

Mobley has also done much to help raise awareness of -- and support for -- the March of Dimes, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, the National Council on Disability, The Exceptional Children's Foundation for the Mentally Retarded and many other charitable organizations.

She is most proud of The Mary Ann Mobley Pediatric Wing at the Rankin General Hospital in her hometown of Brandon, Mississippi.

In retrospect, Mobley realizes she drew fortitude from the faith foundation that was cemented in her childhood by the local church community and by her mother, Mary Holmes, and maternal grandmother, Mary Stuart Farrish.

"I grew up in Brandon -- a small town of 2,500 where it was the norm for children to attend Sunday school at 10 a.m. followed by the main service at 11 a.m. In the evening, we'd return to the church for a youth fellowship meeting. On Wednesdays, we'd head back again for evening prayer meetings and choir practice," remembers Mobley, who donated the first \$2,500 pay check she received for her work as a Miss America to buy a new bell for Brandon's Methodist Church.

For her, it was the most natural of gestures -- her way of giving something back to the community that had done so much to nurture and encourage her.

"You have to understand that in Brandon, I didn't belong just to my family. I belonged to the town. Everyone looked out for one another's children. There was a real feeling of belonging."

*Mary Ann Mobley donated the first \$2,500 pay check she received for her work as a Miss America to buy a new bell for Brandon's Methodist Church. For her, it was the most natural of gestures -- her way of giving something back to the community that had done so much to nurture and encourage her.*

Mobley credits her mother's mother -- who went by the nickname "Manie" and lived to be 101 -- with encouraging her both to dream and to stand up for her beliefs with conviction . . . albeit in a ladylike fashion.

"When I would visit my grandmother as a little girl, I just loved to listen to her stories! At night we'd say our prayers together. As I was falling asleep, she'd tell me to wait under the big oak tree in Fairyland and tell her what I was wearing so she'd recognize me when she got there. I'd tell her I had on a white satin dress that sparkled because it was decorated with a handful of stars. I always had gardenias in my hair," Mobley fondly recalls. Her late grandmother was usually dressed in lavender chiffon, wearing a lavender leghorn hat and carrying a bouquet of violets.

Mobley says her grandmother would also read to her for hours. "Studies that were done after my grandmother's time have shown that

children associate being held and being read to as comforting, nurturing experiences. And so, even though TV is a large part of my business, I believe that we (as a nation of parents) need to spend more time reading to our children."

It was something Mobley and Collins did when their daughter was growing up -- with positive results. Christened "Mary" in keeping with a family tradition that the first-born girl in each generation on the Farrish side of the family be given that first name and "Clancy" in honor of Mobley's paternal grandfather, William Clancy, the couple's only child is now Senior Vice-President of Development for MGM Television.

"I just did a job for her so we've come full circle. Now she's hiring me. Gary and I are really proud of her. We like her; we love her; we respect her," says Mobley.

That beautiful feeling is clearly mutual!


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# When this star comes out, people watch, listen, learn -- and care!

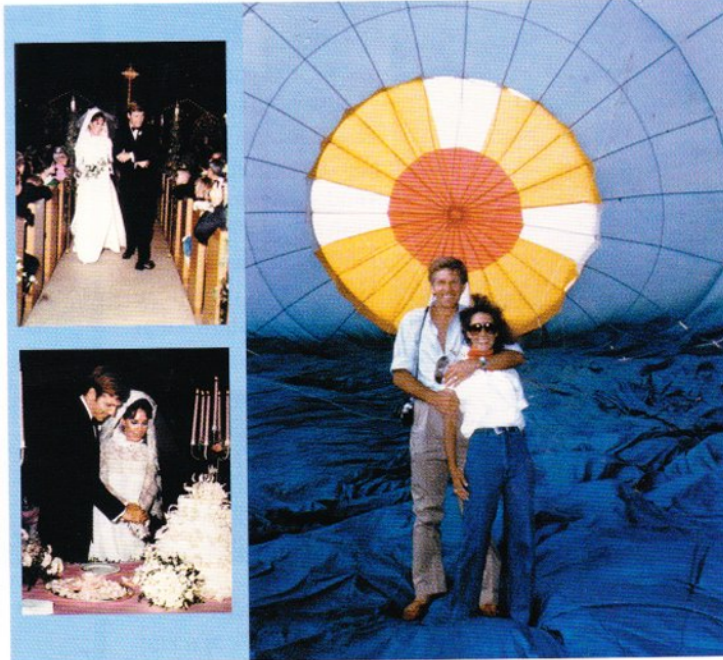
*Having earned a star on the world-famous Hollywood Walk of Fame for his incredible acting abilities and an Emmy for his outstanding work as a TV talk show host, Gary Collins is one of America's most versatile and respected entertainers. But the role in which he takes the greatest pride is that of husband, father and active volunteer in relief organizations to end poverty, disease and world hunger.*

It was while in the service of his country that Collins began his acting career. Stationed with the US Army in Europe, the California native tackled an assignment as a radio and television personality for the Armed Forces Network.

The highlight during his work in musicals and dramas abroad was a Best Actor Award for his performance in "The Rainmarker" at the Paris International Drama Festival in 1959.

Taking his discharge in Europe, Collins made his film debut in "Cleopatra" starring the legendary Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. Next came "The Pigeon That Took Rome" . . . then it was on to Paris for "The Longest Day." He subsequently toured the Netherlands in a musical revue for KLM Airlines, appropriately titled "Say Cheese."

Returning to the USA, Collins was cast in the Broadway production of Tennessee Williams' "The Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore." This was followed by a summer at the world famous Barter Theater in



Family matters most to celebrated actor/ talk show host Gary Collins. He and Mary Ann Mobley have been happily married for 36 years.

Abingdon, Virginia, before he headed to Greece for "Stranded" which became an entry in the 1963 Cannes Film Festival.

Christmas of 1964 found Collins back in Los Angeles where he acted in a string of TV series. These included "The Wackiest

Ship in the Army", "The Iron Horse", "The Sixth Sense" and "Born Free" which was filmed entirely on location in Kenya in 1973. Collins continued his movie career throughout this period with appearances in the original "Airport", "Houston, We've Got

A Problem" and "Hangar 18." His most recent film was "Beautiful", directed by Sally Field and co-starring Minnie Driver.

In addition, Collins has given stellar performances in many other made-for-TV movies including "Roots" -- the most watched mini-series in history. His easygoing style, warmth and concern earned Collins both an Emmy Award and his own star on Hollywood's famous Walk of Fame. Recent TV appearances on "Friends" and "Dharma & Greg" proved the seasoned actor's comic timing is as sharp as ever.

For all his accomplishments on stage and screen, Collins is perhaps almost as well known for his years as the host of Westinghouse's long-running "Hour Magazine" and ABC's "The Home Show."

Collins also found time in between other career engagements to host the Miss America Pageant for nine years. Wed to former Miss America and actress Mary Ann Mobley, the versatile performer finds time to sing in summer musicals with his wife and both



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Actor/talk show host Gary Collins with his star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame. At his side above and in photos on opposite page is wife and best friend Mary Ann Mobley. The couple couldn't be prouder of their daughter Clancy, now an executive with MGM. The favorite holiday portrait of the women in his life was taken shortly before Mary Ann's beloved maternal grandmother passed away. Four generations formed an enduring "Mary" Christmas circle of love: Mary Stuart Farrish, Mary Holmes, Mary Ann Mobley and Mary Clancy Collins.

are in constant demand as speakers.

Both Collins and Mobley are active volunteers for numerous causes and charities, most notably the March of Dimes, the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation, the Susan G. Komen Foundation for Breast Cancer Research and several organizations that address global



hunger, such as World Vision.

They are, without a doubt, two of the TRULY "Beautiful People." No wonder faces light up when these stars come out -- day or night. Each is a class act as well as an act that is hard -- *but very much worth the effort of trying* -- to follow!

## Center for the Family celebrates 25 years

An agency that stands at the forefront of the treatment and prevention of child abuse in Saratoga County is celebrating its 25th anniversary.



The Saratoga Center for the Family provides advocacy for victims and their families with programs and services that continue to expand to meet clients' needs.

The months leading up to the quarter century milestone were especially busy as staff and volunteers prepared to move from Circular Street into the newly created Harriet M. West Child Advocacy Center on Ballston Avenue (Route 50) in Saratoga Springs.

A highlight of the recent celebrations marking the not-for-profit agency's anniversary was the presentation of the Child Advocate of the Year Award to Sonny Bonacio.

The facility built by Bonacio Construction is a central, child-friendly location for mental health treatment and the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect.

To learn more about the Saratoga Center for the Family, please call 587-8008.

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