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Saratoga

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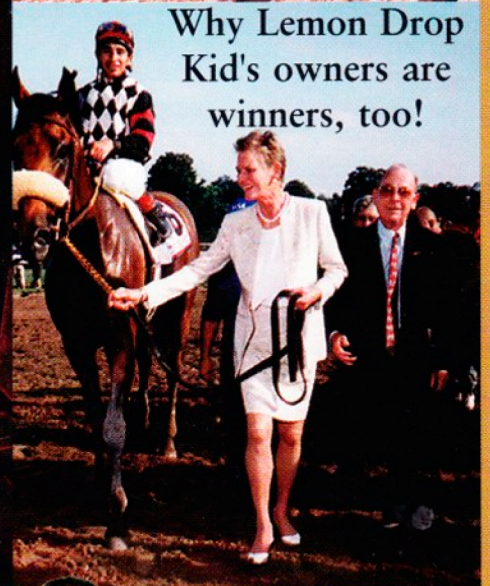
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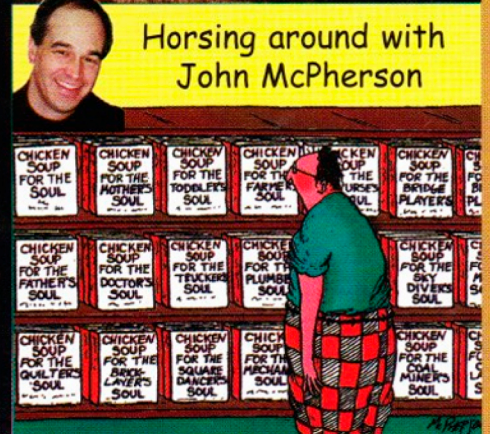


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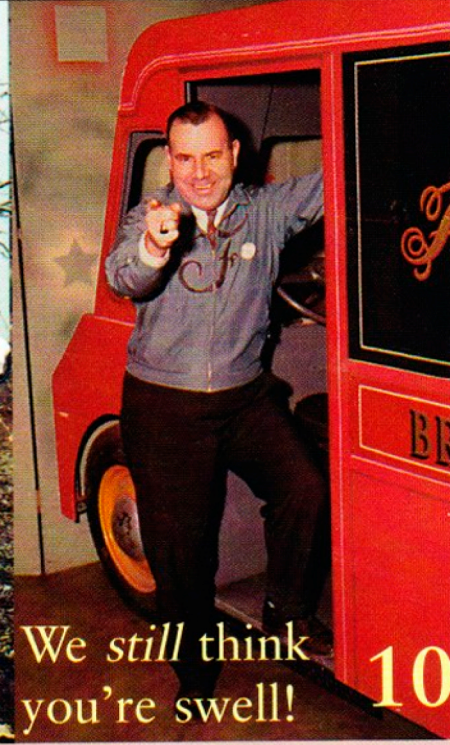
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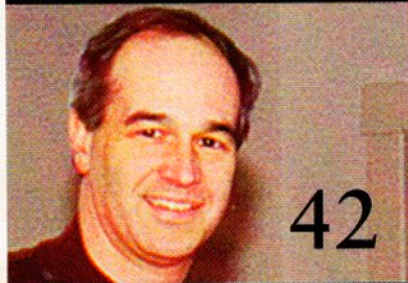
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Saratoga County Living showcases "the faces behind the places" that make this a fascinating area in which to live, work, laugh and play all year long. Published by Grove Communications, the magazine is designed to enlighten and entertain county residents and business people as well as those who grace the region with their presence as college students, convention delegates, tourists or while in the service of the United States Armed Forces. Editorial submissions and advertisements are welcome; however, the publisher reserves the right to decline to publish unsolicited materials for any reason. While we cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage, all materials will be treated with care. Kindly enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with each submission. All correspondence should be addressed to: P.O. Box 99, Middle Grove, N. Y. 12850. Tel. 518-580-0413. E-mail: countyliving@spa.net. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. Copyright© 2000.

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Renew with Marylou!

Widely credited with restoring a touch of class to the historic Upstate city that is home turf to The Sport of Kings and The Queen of Spas is Marylou Whitney. But there is far more to the celebrated socialite than meets the eye. Behind the glamor and glitz that have elevated her to a status approaching royalty is a gem of a human being who has not allowed money or privilege to blind her to the things that ultimately matter most in life: family, friends -- and faith. That, at least, was the conclusion reached by editor Ann Hauprich following an in-depth interview with Marylou Whitney at her enchanting residence on Geyser Road.

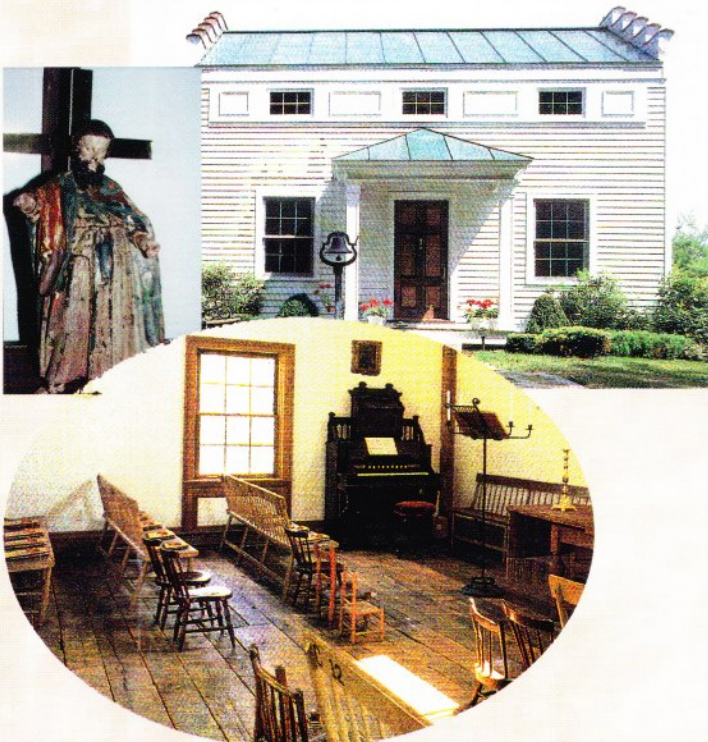


Within the walls of the magnificent mansion on the historic Saratoga County estate known as Cady Hill are many splendidly decorated rooms in which Marylou Whitney may find seclusion.

Yet when it is genuine serenity she seeks, the jet-setting socialite takes a short stroll to a simple white building on the pristine grounds that were once the site of a bustling stage coach stop.

"This is the place I come to for reflection and renewal -- and to give thanks for my blessings," Marylou explains as she opens the doors to reveal a tiny chapel with an interior so stark and humble, yet at the same time so peaceful and inviting, that one momentarily forgets the world outside.

With floors made of rustic boards from an old barn and pews crafted by Shakers of a bygone era, one's eyes can't help but focus on the most colorful object in the room: a statue of Christ from ancient Peru that rests upon



Photographs of Marylou Whitney at home with French poodle Edelweiss and statue of Christ by Ann Hauprich. Views of Cady Hill chapel (above) and the manor house (next page) courtesy of Billy Cunningham/American Design:Second Homes.

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"People who don't know us may find it surprising, but our faith is very important to us," says Marylou, who hopes her most enduring legacy will be that she helped to make the world "a better place in which to live."

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an altar cloth hand-woven in muted earth tones from St. Augustine, Florida.

Marylou cannot count the times she has visited this sanctuary since she and her late husband Cornelius Vanderbilt ("Sonny") Whitney had it built decades ago to resemble an 1810 Dutch-style house to which they had taken a fancy.

"When your schedule requires that you must travel as much as I do, it is not always possible to attend regular church services, and so there is a chapel on each of the Whitney properties where I can go whenever I feel the need, day or night," she explains. "The chapel near our Kentucky home is also quite special. Sonny had it built using logs taken from a cabin that was owned by Daniel Boone's family around 1794."

Yet another chapel, this one constructed using twigs fashioned by early American craftsmen, is found in the Adirondacks. "It's quite a steep climb to get there, but it's well worth it," smiles Marylou, noting that representatives of four denominations endured the uphill trek for its consecration ceremony.

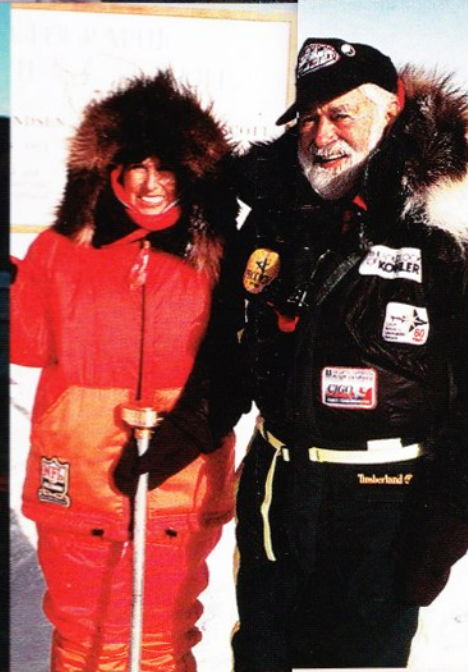
Sometimes Marylou invites family, friends and visiting dignitaries to join her for services in her private chapels. "Our chapel services tend to be rather simple and very touching. There's so much love, so much faith and so many prayers, silent as well as spoken, that people can at times get emotional."

Once, she recalls, then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, though not of the Christian faith, was moved to tears by a prayer service at the Kentucky chapel. Another time, those attending a service in the Adirondacks joined hands to pray for the bedridden, terminally-ill gentleman with the result that "you could almost feel electricity in the air." Three days later, beams Marylou, he was up and walking!

"To me, lighting candles in the chapel and saying special prayers is much more meaningful than sending flowers," she reflects.

It is a source of great joy to her that John Hendrickson, a successful businessman

No matter how far she may roam the rest of the year, Cady Hill on Geyser Road (far right) will always be home to Marylou Whitney during the busy Saratoga Springs summer season. A prized possession inside the historic manor house is a portrait of the famed socialite with husband John Hendrickson by artist Mac Conner. The former actress is as comfortable hamming it up with stage and screen stars as she is cuddling with her grandchildren, posing with Teresian House nuns or greeting the future king of England! Remarkable Marylou even braved frigid South Pole temperatures to visit Norman Vaughan (who had been on Admiral Byrd's expedition) and later accompanied him when he brought the American flag from the South Pole to the North Pole! Marylou proved to be a good sport when Saratoga County parade officials plastered her with fake tatoos to enhance her looks as a "Motorcycle Mama" as a part of a float. She and Olympic skater Tara Lipinski are clearly big fans of "Gone With The Wind" which Marylou's late husband, Cornelius (Sonny) Vanderbilt Whitney, co-produced.





Almost as good as it gets: Marylou Whitney at the races with Jack Nicholson, Joan Rivers and Mohammad Ali.

credited with having a great sense of humor and enormous strength of character, whom she wed in Alaska in 1997, shares her love of the Bible.

"People who don't know us may find it surprising, but our faith is very important to us," says Marylou, an Episcopalian. "I cannot believe how very fortunate I am that I have known the love of two such wonderful men, one much older, and now one much younger, than I."

Seated once again at a table in a cheery pink and white sunroom inside the 15-room Cady Hill manor house, one cannot help but

wonder what it must be like to reside at this luxurious estate that is well hidden from public view by high shrubbery and fences along Geyser Road.

It is, after all, almost impossible to spend a summer in Saratoga Springs without catching a glimpse of Marylou Whitney in the newspapers or on television.

By far the most photographed personality of the racing season, the glamorous socialite is expected to have a smile on her face whenever she ventures out in public.

Rarely does she disappoint those who have focused their lenses upon her.

What those images have failed to capture is something all the money in the world cannot buy: Marylou Whitney's radiance.

The mere fact that there's been so much ado about Marylou in the national as well as the local press makes many people feel they know everything about this particular member of the Whitney dynasty. I certainly had my own set of preconceived notions prior to our tete-a-tete, however, it became clear soon after our interview got underway that I was in the presence of an individual about whom I, in fact, knew absolutely nothing.

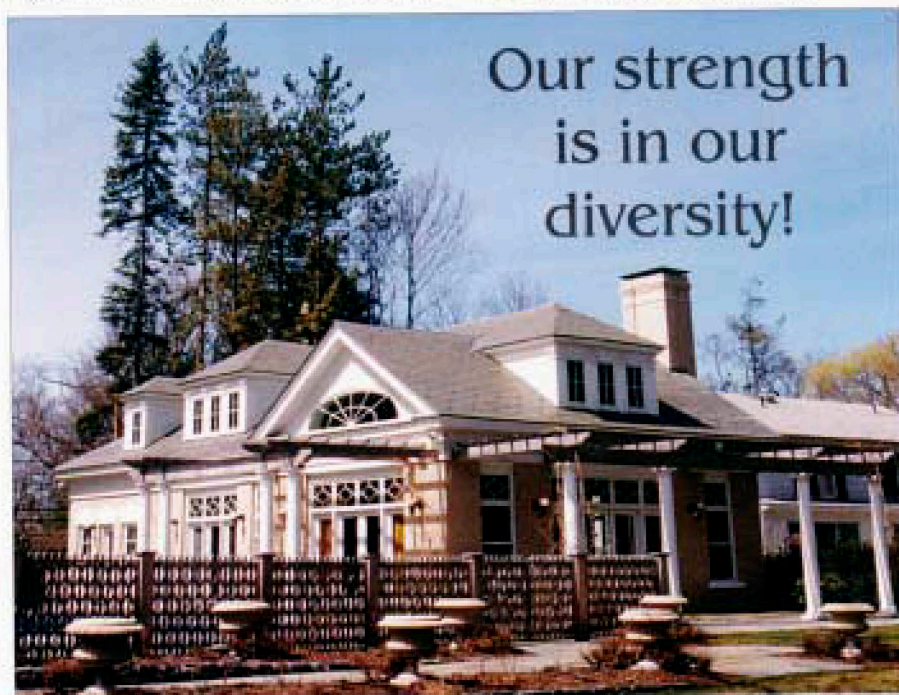
What, I wondered, matters in life to Marylou Whitney?

Among the first topics the woman who has visited all seven continents addressed with earnestness was her concern for the level of patriotism in our nation.

"I love this country so much and am proud to be an American. I have great respect for those in our military and can't bear to hear anyone say anything against America. Do young people today realize how very fortunate they are to live in this great land of ours -- to enjoy the freedoms that we have?" she wondered aloud.

A source of pride in the former actress's own life is that she has regularly entertained American troops through the USO (a role that requires "courage, a good back and faith in God") since World War II. As hard as it is to reconcile Marylou Whitney's youthful appearance with that period in history of half a century ago, it is true! Indeed she performed in Hollywood movies like "Missouri Traveller" (with Lee Marvin) prior to marrying and raising five children with C.V. Whitney.

(Marylou was a single mother who was selling real estate and acting in movies to support her four then young children -- Hobbs, Henry, Marion Llewellyn and Heather when she met Sonny Whitney in Arizona in 1957. The couple married in Nevada in January of 1958 and welcomed a daughter, Cornelia, a



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year and half later.)

Another concern she was quick to voice had to do with the amount-- and quality-- of time today's parents and children spend together. "I hear of households where family members simply heat up different dishes from the freezer in the microwave and go their separate ways at meal time. When do they gather to talk about the day?" she asked, stressing her view that the evening meal is a tradition worth preserving.

During the four decades she and "Sonny" Whitney were wed, Marylou took enormous pride in cooking and homemaking -- a fact well documented in a book by her late husband entitled "Live A Year With A Millionaire" (Maple Hill Press, 1981). In the prologue, Mr. Whitney wrote the following tribute to his wife, whom he affectionately called Mary.

"First, she always dresses beautifully for whatever scenario we are in. Second, she decorates and finishes all of our homes in ways that please her and me. Third, she invites the guests, seats the tables, and provides the entertainment for all the parties we give. Many of these are to raise money for worthwhile charities. Fourth, and by no means least, she is truly a great cook, and has kept me in good physical and mental health."

Marylou Whitney points to her daughter Heather and son-in-law Tim Mabee as an example of how she wishes more parents would be.

Heather, who is president of the National Museum of Dance and Chairman of the Saratoga/Capital Region Commission for the NYS Park System, and Tim, Marketing Director for the Adirondack Trust Company, have a "blended family" of five children all of whom their grandmother says "are well-mannered" and who attend to chores like setting and clearing the dinner table without being asked.

"I just think Heather and Tim are the best parents in the world," beams Marylou. "They cook together, garden together and take the children on vacations in Whitney Park in the Adirondacks where they have a summer home in which no TV is to be found. The children themselves reportedly turned down a recent offer to add a television set, saying they would rather read while spending time inside their mountain getaway.

Talking about her other four children also quickly brings a twinkle to Marylou's eyes.

Hobbs, an industrial engineer, came to Cady Hill to lend assistance in the accounting department when Sonny Whitney became seriously ill about a decade ago. Today Hobbs, whom Marylou describes as "a loyal and kind person", is the estate's accountant. Hobbs and wife Celeste have two children.

Henry (Hank) resides in Alaska where he

is reportedly putting heart and soul into developing a chain of espresso coffee shops as well as building a new life with his new wife, Dale, and six children. "He's working terribly hard, seven days a week, but he just loves it. Of course, I can't help but be proud of him," beams Marylou.

Marion Llewellyn (M'Lou) resides in England where she and her husband own a flower shop and nursery in a quaint village setting. In addition, M'Lou -- who once sang in Greek theaters -- now produces and performs in operas. "She sings like a bird... her voice is so wonderful."

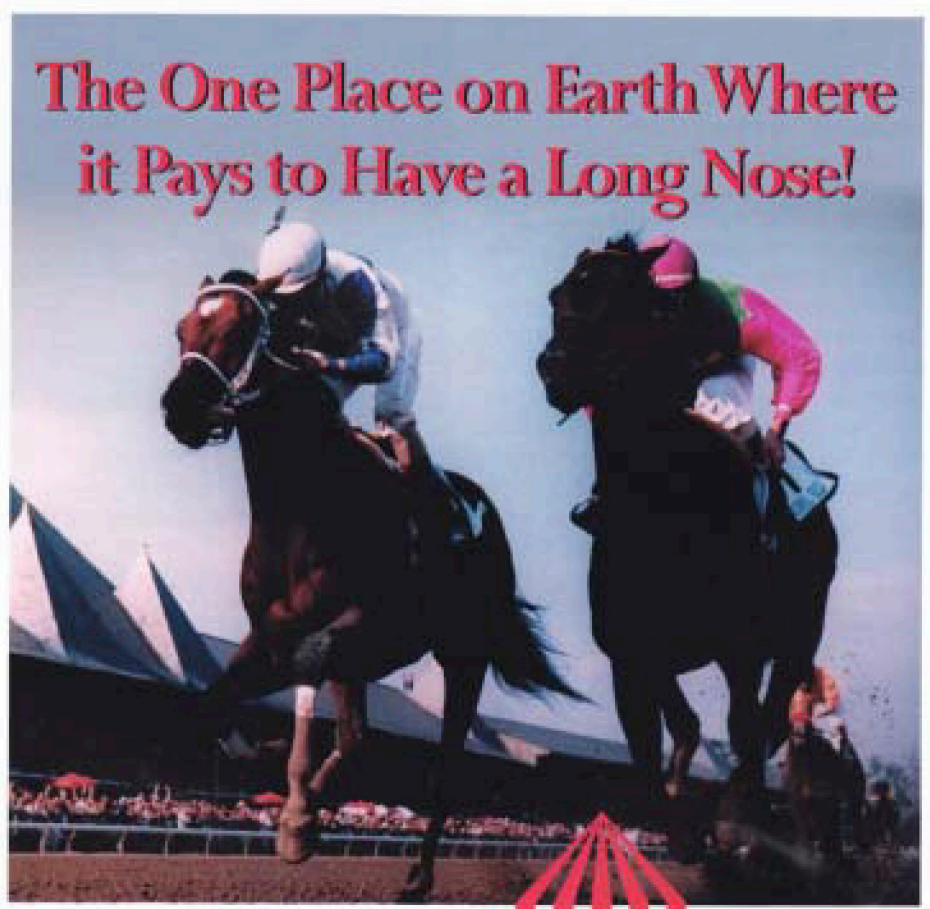
Of the youngest of her five children,

Marylou observes: "Cornelia is just adorable. Married to Scott Tobey, Cornelia has two children and resides in Ithaca, New York.

The closer one looks at Marylou's own life, the clearer it becomes that a dilettante she is not! Often portrayed by the media as a "social butterfly" who flits from one gala to the next during the summer months when the rich and famous flock to "The City of Health, History and Horses", Marylou is, in fact, a dedicated and diligent behind-the-scenes worker.

Rather than simply "making an appearance" at the posh fund-raising events to which she lends her name as a patron or

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New book about C.V. ("Sonny") Whitney

By ANN HAUPRICH

They say you can't judge a book by its cover, but a soon-to-be-published biography of the late Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney appears to have the makings of a literary and pictorial treasure.

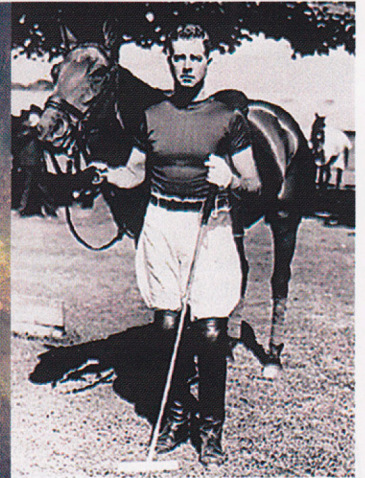
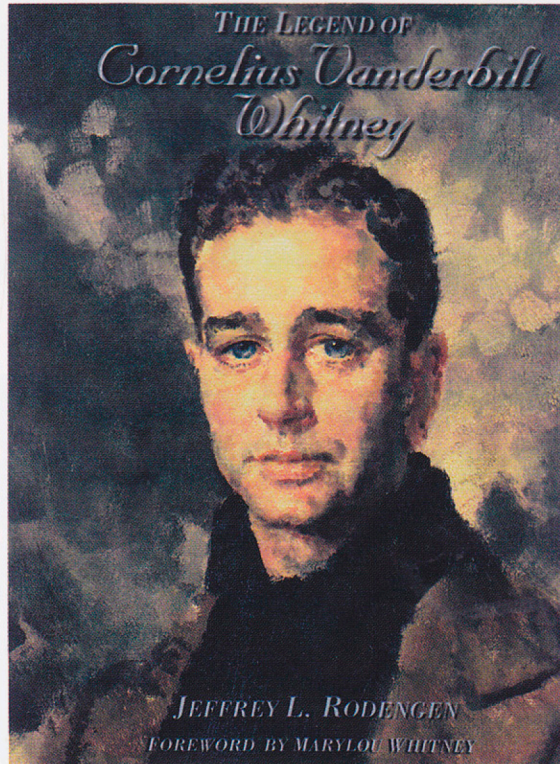
Commissioned and financed by John Hendrickson (who wed Whitney's widow Marylou in 1997) the limited edition 9.5" x 11.5" coffee-table book will be unveiled at a fund-raiser for Saratoga Hospital this summer. All proceeds from the sale of the 5,000 books will benefit the hospital's new cardiac catheterization lab.

Featuring a cover portrait of a young Sonny Whitney by artist Simon Elwes, the book by author Jeffrey L. Rodengen also features many never before published photos of Mr. Whitney.

The book's moving and insightful foreword was penned by Marylou Whitney who calls the work "a long overdue tribute" to her late husband's legacy.

She expects to be on hand to autograph copies at a gala Saratoga Hospital fund-raiser on August 2. The annual event takes place at The Lodge (corner of Nelson and Crescent in Saratoga Springs) from 6-9 p.m.

"Sonny was such an exceptional human being and accomplished so much, yet people know so little about him," says Marylou ruefully. "In addition to being a wonderful husband and father, loving the outdoors and having a marvelous sense of humor, Sonny led a life of great adventure, serving in two world wars, being one of the producers of *Gone With The Wind*, founding Pan American Airways, Marineland (the world's first ocean aquarium), and the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting of Canada."



A new biography of C.V. Whitney (left) includes many rare and vintage photos of the equine loving millionaire in his youth. The keepsake-quality book was commissioned and financed by John Hendrickson (at right with wife Marylou) as a "long-overdue tribute" to the legacy of her late husband.

A polo player of international acclaim in his youth, Sonny Whitney was also among the most successful breeders of thoroughbred horses in the nation and had the distinction of serving as first president of the National Museum of Racing. He also helped to develop and support the Museum of Natural History, The Whitney Museum of New York, the Whitney Gallery of Western Art and the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming.

Although Mr. Whitney was the author of four books: "Lone and Level Sands", "High Peaks", "Live a Year With a Millionaire" and "The Owl Hoots Again", none of them bore testimony to the depth and breadth of his

accomplishments or his merits as an extraordinary American.

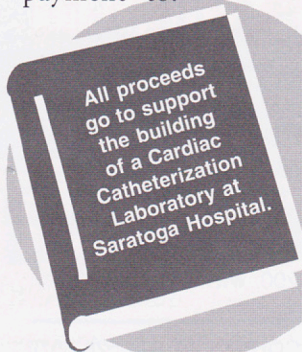
Marylou says credit for the biography of C.V. Whitney belongs squarely on the shoulders of her husband John.

"It was his idea and he deserves all the credit, although, like Sonny, John never wants any praise or any thanks for the good deeds he does. John gives from the heart and insisted on using his own money to make this book a reality," says Marylou. "He wouldn't let me help at all that way."

"John just felt based on all he kept hearing about Sonny that he had never received the recognition he deserved. He wanted to do something to preserve Sonny's legacy and, of

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course, that touched me deeply."

According to Marylou, a moving and priceless compliment was recently paid to John Hendrickson by one of Sonny Whitney's favorite nieces who said: "I wish Uncle Sonny could have known you, John. The two of you would have been best friends."

Receiving word that proceeds from the sale of the heirloom-quality book were slated for donation to the hospital was "something right out of a storybook," according to Terry Lee, Executive Director of the Saratoga CARE foundation.

"We had absolutely no idea this was in the works," Lee told SCL during a mid-April interview. "It came as a surprise -- completely out of the blue. I can't tell you how much this means to us. The whole story of how the book came to be is so moving. It's such a wonderful tribute to a great man . . . that alone makes the whole experience feel like something out of a storybook. It's a fund-raiser's dream come true."

In addition to receiving proceeds from the sale of the 5,000 books, Lee said John Hendrickson has promised to donate the highly prized leather-bound writer's copy to a live auction to benefit the hospital.

"It's not just the money we're so thrilled about," insists Lee. "It's the manner in which John and Marylou have gone about the whole project."

Describing John Hendrickson as "one of the most caring, charismatic individuals I have ever known, Lee added: "There's nothing phony or pretentious about him. He's a WYSIWYG ("what-you-see-is-what-you-get") kind of guy . . . a real charmer and a hard worker, too. All of us at the Foundation just adore him!"

Lee also lavishes praise upon Marylou Whitney, calling her "a woman of enormous personal warmth and integrity whose legacy has been underestimated" by many in the community.

Calling Marylou "irreplaceable", Lee added: "She doesn't just talk the talk, she walks the walk."

"When I first moved to Saratoga from the mid-west 11 years ago and started hearing Marylou-this and Marylou-that, I wondered what all the fuss was about. I expected her to be just another socialite. And then," Lee says matter-of-factly, "I met her."

In the decade since their paths first crossed, Lee says her admiration for Marylou has deepened.

"Marylou truly leads by example. She does not lend her name to a cause or organization lightly, but when she does, she is the first one to step up to the plate as a major donor and,



John Hendrickson & Marylou Whitney

more often than not, as a worker. There is no stopping this woman once she throws her support behind something."

As much as Marylou's steadfast financial support (sometimes signing six

figure checks) has meant to the Saratoga Hospital, Lee says Marylou has also been a morale booster.

Although she could easily board a private jet and fly to any of the finest hospitals in the world for treatment, Marylou reportedly heads for the Saratoga Hospital for care when staying at Cady Hill.

"The fact that she comes here to see our doctors, that she stayed by Mr. Whitney's bedside here when he was so sick, that some of her grandchildren were born here. Now that's really saying something about the level of confidence she has in her local hospital."

On top of all this, Lee (who has been a professional fund-raiser for 25 years) says Marylou has something other socialites too often lack.

"She's got ethics and real spunk. The thing I think that is most striking when you meet Marylou is that she exudes such a joy and zest for life. There's a special magic about her -- an inner beauty that, I believe, comes from having a clear conscience. She is truly one of a kind, and, in my opinion, she is irreplaceable."

Why so much ado about Marylou . . .

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

honorary chair, those in the know say Marylou is usually actively involved in planning, often right down to selecting the paper for the invitations. (And that's saying tons considering she is chair or honorary chair of more than a dozen major summer events!)

Members of her staff at Cady Hill speak of Marylou with open admiration as well as a loyalty they clearly feel she has earned over the years. Priority is given to hiring locals -- from caterers and florists to musicians and printers. "I try to do all that I can, both directly and indirectly, to patronize businesses in and around Saratoga Springs," says Marylou.

"There is a ripple effect every time we have a gala. A lady may decide she needs a new gown or at least a new pair of pantyhose and she may also go out and get her hair done especially for the occasion. A gentleman may realize it's time to get his tuxedo cleaned or to buy a new pair of socks and shoes.

And, of course, the hotels fill right up when it's time for The Whitney Gala and Travers Day festivities. In these and many other ways, I like to think that everyone in the community benefits from the galas -- not just the charities for which we are raising funds."

Lending her ideas, as well as her special touch of class, to these banquets and balls is what helps to ensure they will be a success. It is widely agreed that without Marylou, neither the turnouts nor the amounts raised for worthy areas causes would be as high.

On the flip side, Marylou can quickly distance herself from an organization when she feels honesty, integrity or human rights are being compromised or violated. In a gutsy move that made headlines around the world earlier this year, the socialite withdrew financial support from the Whitney Museum of American Art after discovering it was featuring a controversial exhibit by a non-American artist that portrayed NYC Mayor Rudy Giuliani as a Nazi.

"This piece essentially consisted of trash cans and does a horrible injustice to the Jewish people," insists Marylou, adding: "I despise anything that incites hate."

What does she hope her most enduring legacy will be?

"I want very much to leave the world a better place in which to live."