

We Met Such Interesting People in 1963

We strongly disapproved of some; others inspired us; we cried with some and laughed with others—but they never, never bored us

By THE EDITORS



MADAME NHU

"If there were an attack on the palace, the last one to go down shooting would be Madame Ngo Dinh Nhu, and when she did both guns would be blazing." A British diplomat said that shortly before the South Vietnam army did attack the presidential palace in Saigon and kill Madame Nhu's brother-in-law (the president) and her husband (reportedly the power behind the throne). Madame Nhu, however, was in a Hollywood hotel at the time, resting from a world-spanning monologue during which she shocked many by referring to Buddhist immolation as "barbecuing" and by calling American officers in Vietnam "little soldiers of fortune." Was she the "Dragon Lady" or Joan of Arc? Or just a woman who talked too much? In the waning weeks of '63, she was just a widow, but experts predict she will emerge from mourning "with guns blazing."



YOGI BERRA

Interesting people are not always the winners. The New York Yankees perennially win, yet drew only 100,000 more fans in '63 than

the hapless New York Mets. Only one "character" entertained the payees: Yogi Berra, he of prehistoric physique and ridiculous rhetoric. ("Nobody goes to that restaurant any more. It's too crowded.") Maybe that's why the Yankees pushed dour Ralph Houk upstairs, named colorful Yogi as manager of the gray-pinstriped Yankees. Whitey Ford and Mickey Mantle wired their pal: "We would like our unconditional release to become professional golfers."



LIZ TAYLOR AND RICHARD BURTON

"Where's my husband?" cried Elizabeth Taylor in a melee at Montreal airport. Actually, Eddie Fisher was 1,000 miles away in Nevada (often with actress Renata Boeck). What Liz meant was where is traveling companion Richard Burton, whom she was accompanying to Mexico to make a movie. The confusion was international and year-long. Twice headlines announced the couple would seek divorces from their legal spouses; twice they huffily denied it. In Mexico, would Burton further confuse matters by discovering the charms of costar Sue ("Lolita") Lyon? Apparently his mind was elsewhere. "The other night," he told a reporter, "I totaled 21 (glasses of tequila) before I stopped counting. It was at the beach, and Elizabeth and the others were covered with bites the next morning. I had none. I think I have discovered something."



ROGER STAUBACH

They call Navy's star quarterback "Jolly Roger" Staubach, but "jolly" doesn't describe his personality. He is a serious, modest Middle until Saturday afternoons, when he becomes a daring, dancing pass master. Roger wanted to be a priest; then he wanted to go to Notre Dame. The Navy was virtually third choice, and its curriculum is so tough for him that he has no time for "jolly" undergraduate high jinks. Besides, the junior classman gets up long before the early-rising Navy so he can attend 6 a.m. Mass. Says Roger: "There's lots to be thankful for." The Navy says, "Amen."



GEN. CHARLES DEGAULLE

To most of the Western world he is a cartoonist's delight who goes around upsetting applegarts. To most Frenchmen he is *Le Grand Charles*, the soldier who took power in 1958 when the country, a "me-too" nation in the shadow of the United States and Britain, was verging on civil war. Gen. Charles

DeGaulle changed all that — and never more noticeably than in these past months. He barred Britain from the Common Market; he doggedly went ahead with atomic testing; he scotched plans for a NATO nuclear force. Closer to home, he played South Vietnam against the United States and set out to take over our leadership in European military defense. Why? Some say he is a man who holds a grudge. During World War II, the U.S. initially refused to recognize his Free French government; he felt personally insulted by both Churchill and Roosevelt. There may be some smallness in this great, towering man, but those who believe in him say his motivations are solely those of a patriot. Only one person, however, has absolutely no doubts about what DeGaulle is up to — that is DeGaulle himself. "Nobody else can become the master of our destiny," he says. "We are the best judges of what we ought to do."



DR. MARIA MAYER

"The Beauty in Göttingen" was how they referred to her during undergraduate days at that German university. Nowadays she is Dr. Maria Goeppert Mayer, and when she attends faculty parties at the University of California at La Jolla, observers note that "men still collect around her." What makes her an especially interesting woman, however, is that she won this year's Nobel Prize in physics (with J. Hans D. Jensen of