

Her fabulously successful career may have undermined her

Dinah Shore Tells: "Why I'm Quitting"

By PEER J. OPPENHEIMER

WHY DID Dinah Shore throw away a \$100,000-a-week career by retiring from television? To find out, I arranged to visit her at her home in Palm Springs, Calif.

Finding that home wasn't easy, however. Although Dinah has owned a house in the desert resort for 10 years, even long-time residents have little idea where it is. The first seven people I asked for directions couldn't help me; the eighth person had only a vague idea—and no wonder! Not only is there no street sign, but the house itself is hidden behind a high fence and even taller vegetation.

This is a far cry from Dinah's Beverly Hills home, which had become a tourist attraction. There hardly was a time when some overly eager fan wasn't cruising up and down in front of the house or shouting at Dinah and the children to pose for pictures.

It grew so bad that Dinah finally had to hire a full-time guard to keep some semblance of privacy. "We were trying to raise our children like normal youngsters, and strangers would impose in ways that they would never do with their own relatives or friends," Dinah told me during my recent visit. "And they got mad if I didn't come out and pose with the children in front of our house."

Only Jody, her nine-year-old son, enjoyed the extra attention. He used to sell lemonade to tourists. When anyone asked if he was Dinah Shore's son, he'd say, "Buy some lemonade and I'll tell you." After they bought some and asked again, he'd answer, "Yeah." Dinah didn't consider this the most healthy way of growing up!

Life for her and the children is quite different in Palm Springs. By Beverly Hills standards, her house there is modest. In place of the large staff that helps her run her town house, she has only a housekeeper, Pauline, who has been with her 14 years. Jody and her daughter Missy take care of their own rooms. Dinah herself does most of the cooking, usually answers the phone, and does some of the cleaning. Her secretary comes in from Los Angeles once a week to help with her fan mail.

"We get up at 7 a.m., although I don't particularly enjoy being awakened at that hour," Dinah admits. "But I'd like to see anybody sleep after Jody gets up! After breakfast, I drive Missy to school—Jody ride his bike—and when I come back I often go right back to sleep!"

Judging by her appearance, Dinah's new life seems to agree with her. She was more relaxed, more tanned, more attractive than I had seen her in years. And she also was more willing to discuss her problems—particularly her reason for retirement which, she admits, is for an indefinite period of time. "I never said I'd stay away from television just for one year. I said I wouldn't consider doing a regular weekly show of my own for that long. After that, I'll decide what I want to do."

Why did she make this decision?

