

Pargitay

1967 June 29

Fatal Also to 2 Companions

Crash Kills Jayne Mansfield

By John Carmody

Washington Post Staff Writer

Actress Jayne Mansfield, 34, and two male companions were killed early yesterday when their car smashed into the rear of a slow-moving trailer-truck on a lonely stretch of Louisiana highway.

Her death, by decapitation, concluded a relentless 18-year-long pursuit of stardom which in its time had employed every publicity trick—sought and unsought—in the press agent's handbook. Several of those elements were involved in yesterday's tragedy.

Killed with Miss Mansfield were Samuel S. Brody, her attorney and constant companion, and Ronnie Harrison, 20, of Mississippi City.

Harrison was chauffeuring the actress and Brody to New Orleans from the Gus Stevens Restaurant and Supper Club in Biloxi, Miss., after Miss Mansfield's evening performances there. The 1966 Buick sedan belonged to Stevens.

Miss Mansfield had been scheduled to make a noontime television appearance in New Orleans yesterday.

Three of her five children,

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Associated Press

Jayne Mansfield and lawyer Sam Brody in 1967 photo.

riding in the rear of the sedan, were injured. Marie, 3, Miklos, Jr., 8, and Zoltan, 6, — her children by second husband Miklos (Mickey) Hargity— were described in fair condition at Ochsner Foundation Hospital in New Orleans. Physicians feared, however, that Marie will require plastic surgery because of facial injuries.

Miss Mansfield's oldest daughter, Jayne Marie Mansfield, 16, daughter of her first husband Dave Mansfield was reported in seclusion with relatives in Hollywood.

The actress's fifth child, Antonio, age 1, son of her third husband, Matt Cimber, was under care of a nurse at Miss Mansfield's pink, 13-bedroom Hollywood mansion. Both Hargity and Cimber, whom she divorced last year, flew to New Orleans yesterday.

Two Pet Dogs Killed

Two of Miss Mansfield's four pet Chihuahua dogs were also killed in the accident.

The collision occurred on a curve on a narrow winding road 30 miles east of New Orleans.

Police said the sedan struck a truck-trailer which had been slowed to approximately 35 miles an hour by a fog of insecticide being sprayed by a second truck ahead. The impact of the crash tore the top of the sedan off. All three adults reportedly were hurled through the windshield.

In recent months, Miss Mansfield had been bedeviled by a series of personal misfortunes which kept her on the tabloid front pages she loved but all too often contain an element of tragedy.

Last February, she was accused of committing adultery with attorney Brody. Brody's wife named the actress in a separate maintenance suit.

Son Mauled by Lion

Last November, young Zoltan was mauled by a lion in a Southern California animal compound as Miss Mansfield posed for publicity photos nearby. The youngster survived after several trips to the operating table. Miss Mansfield recently sued the animal compound for \$1.6 million.

In the past year, she had been the victim of a diamond theft in Tokyo, cancelled out of a series of British stage appearances and been accused—though later exonerated—of failing to pay a British hotel



Associated Press

RONNIE HARRISON

... drove death car

bill and Venezuelan taxes. Two weeks ago her daughter Jayne had run away from home and sought police protection, claiming mistreatment by her mother and Brody. The charges later were dropped.

Miss Mansfield's career was a classic example of the Hollywood near-miss. She openly copied the late Marilyn Monroe's early mannerisms—the languid pout, the exploitation of her 40-18-35 figure and the baby voice.

Friends and the publicists who used her well, if not wisely, insisted that the public image concealed a canny, intelligent woman.

Born in Pennsylvania

Born Vera Jayne Palmer in Bryn Mawr, Pa., on April 19, 1933, she grew up in Phillipsburg, N.J., and later moved to Texas.

She married Paul Mansfield, a public relations man, when she was 16 and enrolled with him at Southern Methodist University. One of her first beauty titles was "Miss Photo-flash of 1952."

The couple moved to Los Angeles, where she enrolled at UCLA and received her first break in an independent film production called "Hangover."

Her first big Hollywood chance occurred in 1954, after she appeared at a Miami publicity session for a Jane Russell movie "Underwater" and promptly stole the limelight

with her own bathing-suit appearance.

Her professional high water mark, however, was probably reached on Broadway when she played the "dumb blonde" in "Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?" and subsequently appeared in the film version.

Married Mr. Universe

Divorced from Mansfield in 1958, she almost immediately married Mickey Hargitay, a former Mr. Universe who appeared in an act with Mae West.

They promptly bought a huge mansion on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood, labeled the "pink place," ordered a huge pink, heart-shaped bed (built in Alexandria, Va.) and a heart-shaped swimming pool with the words "I Love You Jayne" painted on the bottom.

In 1959, while on a tour of Latin America, Miss Mansfield was stripped of the waist by over-ardent admirers at a well-photographed Mardi Gras Ball in Rio de Janeiro.

The Hargitay marriage was stormy and ended in a Mexican divorce in 1963. The next year she married Cimber, whom she divorced in 1966.

Meanwhile, Miss Mansfield's appearances in films had dwindled. Her most recent was "Promises, Promises," in which she appeared nude.

Her career in recent years had been limited to night club appearances and supermarket openings. Her contract at the Biloxi, Miss., club was due to end July 4.

