

**The original documents are located in Box 38, folder “Ford, Betty - Hairstyle” of the Sheila Weidenfeld Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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Jim Merson  
31 years old

works at Di Giovanni Coiffures  
4000 Massachusetts  
has worked there 10 years

is originally from Laurel, Md.  
received his training in Washington and New York

met BF thru Nancy Howe, who had been going to  
him for about eight years

Jim pictures Mrs. Ford's hair as a part of the  
over all picture. It's a stylish but conservative type  
of style -- he feels it goes with how she carries  
herself, fits in with the type of clothes she chooses.  
He describes her as very chic, well put together,  
and he feels her hair style helps her achieve that  
overall look. Well-coordinated is another descriptive phrase  
he used.

He does not charge Mrs. Ford for his  
services because she is so good to him. He has not  
mentioned this fact to anyone. I suggested that  
~~next~~ we would probably say, in response to  
any questions, that what he is paid is a private business  
agreement between he and Mrs. Ford and he said that  
is probably what he would also say.



*Jim Merson  
(Mr. Ford's Staff)*

September 18, 1975

Dear Ms. Manzi:

I have received your letter inquiring about Mr. Merson's expenses on the President and Mrs. Ford's trip to Europe; I know they would want you to understand that Mr. Merson's expenses were paid personally by the President and Mrs. Ford.

Thank you again for your interest.

Sincerely,

Sheila Rabb Weidenfeld  
Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford

Ms. Nancy M. Manzi  
6557 Hill-Mar Drive  
Apartment 302  
Forestville, Maryland 20028





## *The First Lady's new hairstyle*

By RUTH KLING

Almost nothing is as important to a well-groomed woman as her weekly beauty salon appointment. However, when the First Lady, Betty Ford, was in Palm Springs, Cal., recently, several women's appointments were suddenly cancelled. Once they realized that Albert Ruess, of the Elizabeth Arden Beverly Hills Salon, had been selected as the stylist to do Mrs. Ford's hair and makeup for her

# Midnight

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**EXCLUSIVE**

# Interview With Mrs. Ford's Hairdresser

Never a hair out of place. That's Betty Ford.

What's her secret? A handsome, 30-year-old beautician named Jim Merson, who has been her personal hairdresser for six months, exclusively told MIDNIGHT how he grooms the First Lady's hair each week.

Every Tuesday morning, Merson lugs a heavy carrying case up the White House steps, slips through a side en-

making small talk until each strand is just so is second nature.

"Talking to Mrs. Ford is like talking to my next-door neighbor," Merson told MIDNIGHT. "We talk about clothes, hair and politics.

"The President will come in occasionally to talk with her while I'm there. When I find they are talking about personal things, I just leave the room."

Merson spends "two or three hours" with the First

fers to wear her hair in a classic pageboy. For State dinners and receptions, she likes a more bouffant look, but the basic style never changes.

"There is a good possibility we may change her hair," Merson said, "but that is only in the talking stage right now. She is comfortable with it.

"I find her hairdo is very becoming. She has good color. She is easy to take care of. I look forward to seeing her."

