

blockbuster new biography

GLENN FORD: MY SECRET LOVE FOR RITA HAYWORTH NEVER DIED



FILM VETERAN Glenn Ford will be 88 in May.

■ *They first fell for each other in 1940*

RITA HAYWORTH was the love of my life! With those tender words, legendary film star Glenn Ford revealed his enduring passion for his tragic "Gilda" co-star and his disappointment that they never married.

He talked candidly about their love-affair for the first time while giving *The ENQUIRER* an exclusive sneak peek at his blockbuster new biography "Glenn Ford: A Life in Film."

Glenn, who is set to celebrate his 88th birthday May 1, married and divorced four times — but throughout his life he always harbored a secret love for the screen goddess who died in 1987 from Alzheimer's disease.

"Rita always held a special place in my dad's heart," explained his son Peter Ford who co-authored the book with Hollywood writer Christopher Nickens. "Onscreen and off, their lives intertwined for decades and their relationship was more significant and complex than either ever publicly acknowledged. Their relationship lasted until the very end, even when Rita could barely recognize him."

Glenn and Rita first fell for each other in 1940 on the set of "The Lady in Question." Rita was just 21.

OUR FIRST SCREEN KISS

"Rita was very shy," Glenn revealed. "When it came time for us to share our first screen kiss, she stiffened up. We tried it several times. Finally we had two rounds of double martinis, and the kissing scene went easily because we were both a little tipsy."

But the onscreen lovers didn't fool around behind the scenes, added Peter, Glenn's son by first wife Eleanor Powell.

"Rita was married at the time, and my dad had a girlfriend, so there was no romance on the set — they saved the fireworks for 'Gilda,'" he explained.

Glenn, who has starred in over 110 movies,



CO-STARS Glenn Ford and Rita Hayworth shared a complex offscreen relationship.

says 1946's "Gilda" is his favorite film, but he cherishes his offscreen relationship with the actress most of all.

MY WARMEST MEMORIES

"My warmest memories of Rita are all the little moments we owned," he says.

"To the world she was a sex symbol, but with me she could just be herself. At times she was glamorous — but other times, she was as shy as a little girl."

When pressed for more details about their affair, the actor replied:

"All the details will come out in the book — you'll just have to read it!"

Peter says that fans can go to his dad's Web site, at www.glennfordonline.com to get an advance look at a chapter of his upcoming biography and check out old photos. *ENQUIRER* readers can also sign the star's guest book and send him a birthday greeting.

— ROBIN MIZRAHI

'Their relationship lasted until the very end'