

A GRANDMA!

2011



She's 58 and insists she's got jowls and a jelly belly. But veteran model Jilly Johnson is proving the young DON'T have a monopoly on glamour

1980s



Fabulous then and fabulous now: Jilly is as trim today as she was as a young model Pictures: BRIAN ARIS

negligee over my wobbly bits and Brian kept saying: "Leave it alone, you look fine!" but I wasn't sure.

'I was sucking in my stomach so much that I almost fainted.'

Yet as hard as she works to stay in shape, she has also had a little extra help along the way to maintain her youthful looks. 'I've had Botox for donkey's years,' she says.

'In the past I've overdone it and had that awful frozen look so many women get nowadays that means you can't laugh with your eyes. The rest of your face moves but your eyes remain fixed — it's not a good look.'

'Now, the only place I have it done is between my eyebrows, because I don't want it to look too obvious. It's not a secret and I'm not frightened to admit to it.'

What about more surgical procedures, though. Has she had a boob job, I wonder? She pauses, bites

her lips, then decides she won't go into specifics. 'I'm not one to be usually coy about these things, but I don't want to say anything because it will haunt me,' she says.

'I'm not denying it — because I don't want to be untruthful — but if I say I've had something done it will follow me around for ever. All I will say is I don't know of anyone in the Seventies who didn't have a boob job.'

I'll take that as a 'yes' then. Be that as it may, she insists that the greatest factor in her long-lasting good looks is not the surgeon's knife, or even the make-up bag, but the gene pool.

'I'm lucky I've inherited my mother's olive skin which doesn't wrinkle very much, incredible when you think of how abused it's been over the years,' she says. 'When I think back to some of the things we did, I shudder. On swimwear shoots, we'd

slather on cooking oil and literally fry. Now we're paying the price because me and my modelling friends are always having bits chopped off us which are turning nasty. I've had a few naughty looking moles taken off before they turn cancerous.'

HER beauty regime today takes half the time and costs half the fortune that it did in years gone by.

'I'm so over expensive brands. I used to trawl the make-up hall of Harrods and fall for the marketing and sales spiel, but now know it's just not worth it. My beauty products are all picked up in the aisles of the supermarket. I cleanse my face with cheap wipes or pads. I've never

used an eye or neck cream in my life, as I think they're a gimmick.

'But I do like body moisturiser. I love L'Oreal, Neutrogena, Nivea, E45. I buy those huge tubs of it and slather it on every night. I'm like a cross-Channel swimmer ready to face the waves before I go to bed.'

'I use fake tan occasionally but, again, only supermarket brands and once every six weeks I wash my hair in Fairy liquid. It's fantastic for stripping off the build-up of conditioner.'

'My biggest beauty secret is exfoliation. I do it all the time, but don't bother with expensive scrubs. I use sea salt from the kitchen when I'm in the shower. It works perfectly and gives your skin a lovely glow.'

And she's also never felt better. Two years off the Big Six Zero, she credits HRT with helping her to feel healthy. 'I was really lucky with the

menopause,' she says. 'I got through it quickly, as I had a full hysterectomy about ten years ago and it was a blessed relief.'

'I'd had a history of gynaecological problems (she was diagnosed with a pre-cancerous condition at the age of 24) and so to be rid of the whole lot was brilliant.'

'I was a bit wary of going on to HRT, but I've never looked back and would definitely recommend it for those ladies who can take it.'

Yet even despite these gorgeous photographs, Jilly still maintains she's not a beauty. 'I know that I can smarten myself up and make the best of myself, but my features are too uneven, I have too many wobbly bits. 'I suppose I could say I'm attractive but not beautiful.'

Proof that the only part of Jilly Johnson that appears to be deteriorating is her eyesight.